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BRITISH THEATRE

VOLUME THE FOURTEENTH.

LONDON.
Printed by C.WHITTINGHAM, Dean Street.
Published by JOHN SHARPE, Piccadilly.
1805.

E.F. Burney inv.t

SHARPE's

BRITISH THEATRE.

THE DOUBLE GALLANT.
LOVE IN A VILLAGE.
ZARA.
THE DEVIL TO PAY.

VOL. XIV.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY C. WHITTINGHAM,
Dean Street,
FOR JOHN SHARPE, OPPOSITE YORK HOUSE,
PICCADILLY.

1805.

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THE

DOUBLE GALLANT;

OR, THE

SICK LADY'S CURE.

A

COMEDY.

BY

COLLEY CIBBER, ESQ.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY C. WHITTINGHAM,

Dean Street,

FOR JOHN SHARPE, OPPOSITE YORK HOUSE,

PICCADILLY.

1805.

C. 44.

PROLOGUE.

COULD those, who never try'd, conceive the sweat,
The toil requir'd, to make a Play complete;
They'd pardon, or encourage all that could
Pretend to be but tolerably good.
Plot, Wit, and Humour's hard to meet in one,
And yet, without 'em all——all's lamely done:
One Wit, perhaps, another Humour paints;
A third designs you well, but Genius wants;
A fourth begins with fire—but, ah! too weak to hold it, faints.
A modern Bard, who late adorn'd the bays,
Whose muse advanc'd his fame to envy'd praise,
Was still observ'd to want his judgment most in plays.
Those, he too often found, requir'd the pain,
And stronger forces of a vig'rous brain:
Nay, even alter'd Plays, like old houses mended,
Cost little less than new, before they're ended;
At least, our Author finds the experience true,
For equal pains has made this wholly new:
And though the *name* seems old, the *scenes* will show
That 'tis, in fact, no more the same, than now
Fam'd Chatsworth is, what 'twas some years ago.
Pardon the boldness, that a Play should dare,
With works of so much wonder to compare:
But as that fabric's ancient walls or wood
Were little worth, to make this new one good;
So of this Play, we hope, 'tis understood;
For though from former *scenes* some hints he draws,
The ground-plot's wholly chang'd from what it was:
Not but he hopes you'll find enough that's new,
In plot, in persons, wit, and humour too:
Yet what's not his, he owns in other's right,
Nor toils he now for fame, but your delight.
If that's attain'd, what's the matter whose the Play's;
Applaud the *Scenes*, and strip him of the praise.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Sir Solomon Sadlife, *an old City Knight.*
Clerimont, *attached to* Clarinda.
Careleſs, *in purſuit of Lady* Dainty.
Atall, *the Double Gallant.*
Old Mr. Wilful, *Father to* Sylvia.
Sir Harry Atall, *Father to* Atall.
Supple, *Servant to Sir* Solomon.
Dr. Blister, } *Lady* Dainty's *Medical Attendants.*
Rhubarb, }
Finder, *Servant to* Atall.

Lady Dainty, *an absurd Hypocondriac.*
Lady Sadlife, *Wife to Sir* Solomon.
Clarinda, *a Coquette.*
Sylvia, *attached to* Atall.
Wishwell, *Servant to Lady* Sadlife.
Situp, *Servant to Lady* Dainty.

SCENE, London.

THE

DOUBLE GALLANT.

ACT I.

SCENE I. The Park.

Enter CLERIMONT *and* ATALL.

Cler. MR. Atall, your very humble servant.

At. O, Clerimont, such an adventure! I was just going to your lodgings; such a transporting accident! in short, I am now positively in love for altogether.

Cler. All the sex together, I believe.

At. Nay, if thou dost not believe me, and stand my friend, I am ruin'd past redemption.

Cler. Dear sir, if I stand your friend without believing you, won't that do as well? But why should you think I don't believe you? I have seen you twice in love within this fortnight; and it would be hard indeed to suppose a heart of so much mettle could not hold out a third engagement.

At. Then, to be serious, in one word, I am honourably in love; and, if she proves the woman I am sure she must, will positively marry her.

Cler. Marry! O degenerate virtue!

At. Now, will you help me?

Cler. Sir, you may depend upon me. Pray give me leave first to ask a question or two. What is this honourable lady's name?

At. Faith, I don't know.

Cler. What are her parents?

At. I can't tell.

Cler. What fortune has she?

At. I don't know.

Cler. Where does she live?

At. I can't tell.

Cler. A very concise account of the person you design to marry. Pray, sir, what is it you do know of her?

At. That I'll tell you. Coming yesterday from Greenwich by water, I overtook a pair of oars, whose lovely freight was one single lady, and a fellow in a handsome livery in the stern. When I came up, I had at first resolved to use the privilege of the element, and bait her with waterman's wit, till I came to the bridge; but, as soon as she saw me, she very prudently prevented my design; and, as I paſsed, bowed to me with an humble blush, that spoke at once such sense, so just a fear, and modesty, as put the loosest of my thoughts to rout. And when she found her fears had moved me into manners, the cautious gloom that sat upon her beauties disappeared; her sparkling eyes resumed their native fire: she looked, she smiled, she talked, while her diffusive charms new fired my heart, and gave my soul a softneſs it never felt before. ——To be brief, her conversation was as charming as her person, both easy, unconstrained, and sprightly: but then her limbs! O rapturous thought! The snowy down upon the wings of unfledged love had never half that softneſs.

Cler. Raptures indeed. Pray, sir, how came you so well acquainted with her limbs?

At. By the most fortunate misfortune sure that ever was: for, as we were shooting the bridge, her boat, by the negligence of the waterman, running against the piles, was overset; out jumps the footman to take care of a single rogue, and down went the poor lady to the bottom. My boat being before her, the stream drove her, by the help of her clothes, toward me; at sight of her I plunged in, caught her in my arms, and, with much ado, supported her till my waterman pulled in to save us. But the charming difficulty of her getting into the boat, gave me a transport that all the wide water in the Thames had not power to cool: for, sir, while I was giving her a lift into the [redacted], I found the floating of her clothes had left

her lovely limbs beneath as bare as a new-born Venus rising from the sea.

Cler. What an impudent happineſs art thou capable of!

At. When she was a little recovered from her fright, she began to enquire my name, abode, and circumstances, that she might know to whom she owed her life and preservation. Now, to tell you the truth, I durst not trust her with my real name, lest she should from thence have discovered that my father was now actually under bonds to marry me to another woman; so, faith, I even told her my name was Freeman, a Gloucestershire gentleman of a good estate, just come to town about a chancery suit. Besides, I was unwilling any accident should let my father know of my being yet in England, lest he should find me out, and force me to marry the woman I never saw (for which, you know, he commanded me home) before I have time to prevent it.

Cler. Well, but could you not learn the lady's name all this while?

At. No, faith, she was inexorable to all intreaties; only told me in general terms, that if what I vowed to her was sincere, she would give me a proof in a few days what hazards she would run to requite my services; so, after having told her where she might hear of me, I saw her into a chair, preſsed her by the cold rosy fingers, kiſsed them warm, and parted.

Cler. What, then you are quite off with the lady, I suppose, that you made an acquaintance with in the Park last week?

At. No, no; not so neither: one's my Juno, all pride and beauty; but this my Venus, all life, love, and softneſs. Now, what I beg of thee, dear Clermont, is this: Mrs. Juno, as I told you, having done me the honour of a civil visit or two at my own lodgings, I must needs borrow thine to entertain Mrs. Venus in; for if the rival goddeſses should meet and clash, you know there would be the devil to do between them.

Cler. Well, sir, my lodgings are at your service—but you must be very private and sober, I

tell you; for the landlady's a Presbyterian; if she suspects your design, you're blown up, depend upon't.

At. Don't fear; I'll be as careful as a guilty conscience: but I want immediate poſſeſſion; for I expect to hear from her every moment, and have already directed her to send thither. Prithee, come with me.

Cler. 'Faith you must excuse me; I expect some ladies in the Park that I would not miſs of for an empire: but yonder's my servant, he shall conduct you.

At. Very good! that will do as well then; I'll send my man along with him to expect her commands, and call me if she sends; and in the mean time I'll e'en go home to my own lodgings; for, to tell you the truth, I expect a small meſsage there from my goddeſs imperial. And I am not so much in love with my new bird in the bush, as to let t'other fly out of my hand for her.

Cler. And pray, sir, what name does your goddeſs imperial, as you call her, know you by?

At. O, sir, with her I paſs for a man in arms, and am called Colonel Standfast; with my new face, John Freeman, of Flatland-Hall, esq.——But time flies: I must leave you.

Cler. Well, dear Atall, I'm yours——Good luck to you. [*Exit At.*]——What a happy fellow is this, that owes his succeſs with the women purely to his inconstancy? Here comes another too, almost as happy as he, a fellow that's wise enough to be but half in love, and make his whole life a studied idleneſs.

Enter CARELESS.

So, Careleſs! you're constant, I see, to your morning's saunter.——Well, how stand matters?—I hear strange things of thee; that after having railed at marriage all thy life, thou hast resolved to fall into the noose at last.

Care. I don't see any great terror in the noose, as you call it, when a man's weary of liberty: the liberty of playing the fool, when one's turned of thirty, is not of much value.

Cler. Hey-day! Then you begin to have nothing in your head now, but settlements, children, and the main chance?

Care. Even so, faith; but in hopes to come at 'em too, I am forced very often to make my way through pills, elixirs, bolus's, ptisans, and gallipots.

Cler. What, is your mistress an apothecary's widow?

Care. No, but she is an apothecary's shop, and keeps as many drugs in her bed-chamber; she has her physic for every hour of the day and night—— for 'tis vulgar, she says, to be a moment in rude and perfect health. Her bed lined with poppies; the black boys at the feet, that the healthy employ to bear flowers in their arms, she loads with diascordium, and other sleepy potions: her sweet bags, instead of the common and offensive smells of musk and amber, breathe nothing but the more modish and salubrious scents of hartshorn, rue, and asafœtida.

Cler. Why, at this rate, she's only fit to be the consort of Hippocrates. But, pray, what other charms has this extraordinary lady?

Care. She has one, Tom, that a man may relish without being so deep a physician.

Cler. What's that?

Care. Why, two thousand pounds a year.

Cler. No vulgar beauty, I confess, sir. But canst thou for any consideration throw thyself into this hospital, this box of physic, and lie all night like leaf-gold upon a pill?

Care. O, dear sir, this is not half the evil; her humour is as fantastic as her diet; nothing that is English must come near her; all her delight is in foreign impertinences: her rooms are all of Japan or Persia, her dress Indian, and her equipage are all monsters: the coachman came over with his horses, both from Russia; Flanders are too common; the rest of her trim are a motley crowd of blacks, tawny, olives, feuilamots, and pale blues: in short, she's for any thing that comes from beyond sea; her greatest monsters are those of her own country; and she's in love with nothing o' this side the line, but the apothecaries.

Cler. Apothecaries, quotha! why your fine lady, for aught I see, is a perfect dose of folly and physic; in a month's time she'll grow like an antimonial cup, and a kiss will be able to work with you.

Care. But to prevent that, Tom, I design upon the wedding-day to break all her gallipots, kick the doctor down stairs, and force her, instead of physic, to take a hearty meal of a swinging rump of boiled beef and carrots, and so 'faith I have told her.

Cler. That's something familiar: are you so near man and wife?

Care. O nearer; for I sometimes plague her till she hates the very sight of me.

Cler. Ha, ha! very good! So being a very troublesome lover, you pretend to cure her of her physic by a counter poison.

Care. Right; I intend to see a doctor to prescribe to her an hour of my conversation to be taken every night and morning; and this to be continued till her fever of aversion's over.

Cler. An admirable recipe!

Care. Well, Tom, but how stands thy own affair? Is Clarinda kind yet?

Cler. Faith I cannot say she's absolutely kind, but she's pretty near it: for she's grown so ridiculously ill-humoured to me of late, that if she keeps the same airs a week longer, I am in hopes to find as much ease from her folly, as my constancy would from her good nature.——But to be plain, I'm afraid I have some secret rival in the case; for women's vanity seldom gives them courage enough to use an old lover heartily ill, till they are first sure of a new one, that they intend to use better.

Care. What says Sir Solomon? He is your friend, I presume?

Cler. Yes; at least I can make him so when I please: there is an odd five hundred pound in her fortune, that he has a great mind should stick to his fingers, when he pays in the rest on't; which I am afraid I must comply with, for she can't easily marry without his consent.———And yet she's so altered in her behaviour of late, that I scarce know

what to do.——Prithee take a turn and advise me.

Care. With all my heart. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. Changes to Sir Solomon Sadlife's *House.*

Enter Sir SOLOMON, *and* SUPPLE *his Man,*

Sir Sol. Supple, dost not thou perceive I put a great confidence in thee?——I trust thee with my bosom secrets.

Sup. Yes, sir.

Sir Sol. Ah, Supple! I begin to hate my wife—— but be secret———

Sup. I'll never tell while I live, sir.

Sir Sol. Nay, then I'll trust thee further. Between thee and I, Supple, I have reason to believe my wife hates me too.

Sup. Ah, dear sir! I doubt that's no secret; for to say the truth, my lady's bitter young and gamesome.

Sir Sol. But can she have the impudence, think'st thou, to make a cuckold of a knight, one that was dubbed by the royal sword?

Sup. Alas, sir, I warrant she has the courage of a countess; if she's once provoked, she cares not what she does in her passion; if you were ten times a knight she'll give you dub for dub, sir.

Sir Sol. Ah! Supple, when her blood's up, I confess she's the devil; and I question if the whole conclave of cardinals could lay her. But suppose she should resolve to give me a sample of her sex, and make me a cuckold in cool blood?

Sup. Why, if she should, sir, don't take it so to heart; cuckolds are no such monsters now-a-days: in the city, you know, sir, it's so many honest men's fortune, that nobody minds it there; and at this end of the town, a cuckold has as much respect as his wife, for aught I see; for gentlemen don't know but it may be their own case another day, and so people are willing to do as they would be done by.

Sir Sol. And yet I do not think but my spouse is

honest—and think she is not——would I were satisfied.

Sup. Troth, sir, I don't know what to think, but in my conscience I believe good looking after her can do her no harm.

Sir Sol. Right, Supple; and in order to it, I'll first demolish her visiting days. For how do I know but they may be so many private clubs for cuckoldom?

Sup. Ah, sir! your worship knows I was always against your coming to this end of the town.

Sir Sol. Thou wert indeed, my honest Supple: but woman! fair and faithless woman, wormed and worked me to her wishes;—like fond Mark Antony, I let my empire moulder from my hands, and gave up all for love.—I must have a young wife, with a murrain to me—I hate her too—and yet the devil on't is, I'm still jealous of her.—Stay! let me reckon up all the fashionable virtues she has that can make a man happy. In the first place—I think her very ugly.

Sup. Ah, that's because you are married to her, sir.

Sir Sol. As for her expences, no arithmetic can reach them; she's always longing for something dear and useless; she will certainly ruin me in china, silks, ribands, fans, laces, perfumes, washes, powder, patches, jessamine gloves, and ratifia.

Sup. Ah, sir, that's a cruel liquor with them.

Sir Sol. To sum up all would run me mad.—— The only way to put a stop to her career, must be to put off my coach, turn away her chairmen, lock out her Swiss porter, bar up the doors, keep out all visiters, and then she'll be less expensive.

Sup. Ay, sir, for few women think it worth their while to dress for their husbands.

Sir Sol. Then we sha'n't be plagued with my old Lady Tittle-tattle's how d'ye's in a morning, nor my Lady Dainty's spleen, or the sudden indisposition of that grim beast her horrible Dutch mastiff.

Sup. No, sir, nor the impertinence of that great fat creature, my Lady Swill-Tea.

Sir Sol. And her squinting daughter.—No, Sup-

ple, after this night, nothing in petticoats shall come within ten yards of my doors.

Sup. Nor in breeches neither.

Sir Sol. Only Mr. Clerimont; for I expect him to sign articles with me for the five hundred pounds he is to give me, for that ungovernable jade my niece Clarinda.——But now to my own affairs. I'll step into the park, and see if I can meet with my hopeful spouse there. I warrant, engaged in some innocent freedom, as she calls it, as walking in a mask, to laugh at the impertinencies of fops that don't know her; but 'tis more likely, I'm afraid, a plot to intrigue with those that do. Oh, how many torments lie in the small circle of a wedding-ring.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. Clarinda's *Apartment.*

Enter CLARINDA *and* SYLVIA.

Cla. Ha, ha! poor Sylvia!

Syl. Nay, prithee don't laugh at me. There's no accounting for inclination: for if there were, you know, why should it be a greater folly in me, to fall in love with a man I never saw but once in my life, than it is in you to resist an honest gentleman, whose fidelity has deserved your heart an hundred times over.

Clar. Ah, but an utter stranger, cousin, and one that, for aught you know, may be no gentleman.

Syl. That's impoſsible: his conversation could not be counterfeit. An elevated wit, and good breeding, have a natural lustre that's inimitable. Beside, he saved my life at the hazard of his own; so that part of what I give him, is but gratitude.

"*Clar.* Well;—you are the first woman that ever "took fire in the middle of the Thames, sure." But suppose now he is married, and has three or four children.

Syl. Psha! prithee don't tease me with so many ill-natured objections. I tell you he is not married? I am sure he is not: for I never saw a face look more fu humour in my life. Beside, he told me himself, he was a country gentleman, just come to town upon busineſs: and I am resolved to believe him.

Clar. Well, well; I'll suppose you both as fit for one another as a couple of tallies. But, still, my dear, you know there's a surly old father's command against you; he is in articles to marry you to another: and though I know love is a notable contriver, I can't see how you'll get over that difficulty.

Syl. 'Tis a terrible one, I own; but with a little of your aſsistance, dear Clarinda, I am still in hopes to bring it to an even wager, I prove as wise as my father.

Clar. Nay, you may be sure of me; you may see by the management of my own amours, I have so natural a compaſsion for disobedience, I sha'n't be able to refuse you any thing in distreſs.—There's my hand; tell me how I can serve you?

Syl. Why thus:——because I would not wholly discover myself to him at once, I have sent him a note to visit me here, as if these lodgings were my own.

Clar. Hither! to my lodging! 'Twas well I sent Colonel Standfast word I should not be at home.

[*Aside.*

Syl. I hope you'll pardon my freedom, since one end of my taking it too, was to have your opinion of him before I engage any farther.

Clar. Oh, it needs no apology; any thing of mine is at your service.——I am only afraid my troublesome lover, Mr. Clerimont, should happen to see him, who is of late so impertinently jealous of a rival, though from what cause I know not——not but I lie too. [*Aside.*] I say, should he see him, your country gentleman would be in danger, I can tell you.

Syl. Oh, there's no fear of that; for I have ordered him to be brought in the back way: when I have talked with him a little alone, I'll find an occaſion to leave him with you; and then we'll compare our opinions of him.

Enter a SERVANT *to* CLARINDA.

Serv. Madam, my Lady Sadlife.

Syl. Psha! she here!

Clar. Don't be uneasy; she sha'n't disturb you: I'll take care of her.

Enter Lady SADLIFE.

L. Sad. Oh, my dears, you have lost the sweetest morning, sure, that ever peeped out of the firmament. The park never was in such perfection.

Clar. 'Tis always so when your ladyship's there.

L. Sad. 'Tis never so without my dear Clarinda.

Syl. How civilly we women hate one another! [*Aside.*] Was there a good deal of company, madam?

L. Sad. Abundance! and the best I have seen this season: for 'twas between twelve and one, the very hour you know when the mob are violently hungry. Oh, the air was so inspiring! so amorous! And to complete the pleasure, I was attacked in conversation by the most charming, modest, agreeably insinuating young fellow, sure, that ever woman played the fool with.

Clar. Who was it?

L. Sad. Nay, Heaven knows; his face is as entirely new as his conversation. What wretches our young fellows are to him!

Syl. What sort of a person?

L. Sad. Tall, straight, well-limbed, walked firm, and a look as cheerful as a May-day morning.

Syl. The picture's very like; pray Heaven it is not my gentleman's! [*Aside.*

Clar. I wish this don't prove my colonel. [*Aside.*

Syl. How came you to part with him so soon?

L. Sad. Oh, name it not! that eternal damper of all pleasure, my husband, Sir Solomon, came into the Mall in the very crisis of our conversation.—I saw him at a distance, and complained that the air grew tainted, that I was sick o' th' sudden, and left him in such abruptness and confusion, as if he had been himself my husband.

Clar. A melancholy disappointment, indeed!

L. Sad. Oh, 'tis a husband's nature to give them.

A SERVANT *enters and whispers* SYLVIA.

Syl. Desire him to walk in.—Cousin, you'll be at hand.

Clar. In the next room.——Come, madam, Sylvia has a little business: I'll shew you some of the sweetest, prettiest figured china.

L. Sad. My dear, I wait on you.

[*Exeunt L. Sad. and Clar.*

Enter ATALL, *as Mr.* FREEMAN.

Syl. You find, sir, I have kept my word in seeing you; 'tis all you yet have asked of me; and when I know 'tis in my power to be more obliging, there's nothing you can command in honour I shall refuse you.

At. This generous offer, madam, is so high an obligation, that it were almost mean in me to ask a farther favour. But 'tis a lover's merit to be a miser in his wishes and grasp at all occasions to enrich them. I own I feel your charms too sensibly prevail, but dare not give a loose to my ambitious thoughts, till I have passed one dreadful doubt that shakes them.

Syl. If 'tis in my power to clear it, ask me freely.

At. I tremble at the trial; and yet, methinks, my fears are vain: but yet to kill or cure them once for ever, be just and tell me—y—are you married?

Syl. If that can make you easy, no.

At. 'Tis ease indeed—nor are you promised, nor your heart engaged?

Syl. That's hard to tell you: but to be just, I own my father has engaged my person to one I never saw; and my heart I fear is inclining to one he never saw.

At. Oh, yet be merciful, and ease my doubt; tell me the happy man that has deserved so exquisite a blessing.

Syl. That, sir, requires some pause: first tell me

why you're so inquisitive, without letting me know the condition of your own heart.

At. In every circumstance my heart's the same with yours; 'tis promised to one I never saw, by a commanding father, who, by my firm hopes of happineſs, I am resolved to disobey, unleſs your cruelty prevents it.

Syl. Bnt my disobedience would beggar me.

At. Banish that fear. I'm heir to a fortune will support you like yourself.—May I not know your family.

Syl. Yet you must not.

At. Why that nicety? Is not it in my power to inquire whose house this is when I am gone?

Syl. And be never the wiser. These lodgings are a friend's, and are only borrowed on this occasion: but to save you the trouble of any further needleſs questions, I will make you one proposal. I have a young lady here within, who is the only confidant of my engagements to you: on her opinion I rely; nor can you take it ill, if I take no farther steps without it: 'twould be miserable indeed should we both meet beggars. I own your actions and appearance merit all you can desire; let her be as well satisfied of your pretensions and condition, and you shall find it sha'n't be a little fortune shall make me ungrateful.

At. So generous an offer exceeds my hopes.

Syl. Who's there?

Enter a SERVANT.

Desire my cousin Clarinda to walk in.

At. Ha! Clarinda! If it should be my Clarinda now, I'm in a sweet condition——by all that's terrible the very she!—this was finely contrived of fortune. [*Aside.*

Enter CLARINDA.

Clar. Defend me! Colonel Standfast!—She has certainly discovered my affairs with him, and has a mind to insult me by an affected resignation of her pretensions to him.—I'll disappoint her—I won't know him. [*Aside*

Syl. Cousin, pray, come forward; this is the

tleman I am so much obliged to—sir, this lady is a relation of mine, and the person we were speaking of.

At. I shall be proud to be better known among any of your friends. [*Salutes her.*

Clar. Soh! he takes the hint, I see, and seems not to know me neither: I know not what to think—I am confounded!—I hate both him and her.—How unconcerned he looks! Confusion! he addreſses her before my face.

Lady SADLIFE *peeping in.*

L. Sad. What do I see? The pleasant young fellow that talked with me in the park just now! This is the luckiest accident! I must know a little more of him. [*Retires.*

Syl. Cousin, and Mr. Freeman, I think I need not make any apology—you both know the occasion of my leaving you together—in a quarter of an hour I'll wait on you again. [*Exit Syl.*

At. So! I'm in a hopeful way now, faith;—but buff's the word: I'll stand it.

Clar. Mr. Freeman! So, my gentleman has changed his name too! How harmleſs he looks!—I have my senses sure, and yet the demureneſs of that face looks as if he had a mind to persuade me out of them. I could find in my heart to humour his aſsurance, and see how far he'll carry it——Will not you please to sit, sir? [*They sit.*

At. What the devil can this mean?—Sure she has a mind to counterface me, and not know me too——With all my heart: if her ladyship won't know me, I'm sure 'tis not my buſineſs at this time to know her. [*Aside.*

Clar. Certainly that face is cannon proof. [*Aside.*

At. Now for a formal speech, as if I had never seen her in my life before. [*Aside.*] Madam—a-hem! madam—I—a-hem!

Clar. Curse of that steady face. [*Aside.*

At. I say, madam, since I am an utter stranger to you, I am afraid it will be very difficult for me to offer you more arguments than one to do me a friendship with your cousin; but if you are, as she

seems to own you, her real friend, I presume you can't give her a better proof of your being so, than pleading the cause of a sincere and humble lover, whose tender wishes never can propose to taste of peace in life without her.

Clar. Umph! I'm choked. [*Aside.*

At. She gave me hopes, that when I had satisfied you of my birth and fortune, you would do me the honour to let me know her name and family.

Clar. Sir, I must own you are the most perfect master of your art, that ever entered the lists of assurance.

At. Madam!

Clar. And I don't doubt but you'll find it a much easier task to impose upon my cousin than me.

At. Impose, madam! I should be sorry any thing I have said could disoblige you into such hard thoughts of me. Sure, madam, you are under some misinformation.

Clar. I was indeed, but now my eyes are open; for, till this minute, I never knew that the gay Colonel Standfast was the demure Mr. Freeman.

At. Colonel Standfast! This is extremely dark, madam.

Clar. This jest is tedious, sir—impudence grows dull, when 'tis so very extravagant.

At. Madam, I am a gentleman—but not yet wise enough, I find, to account for the humours of a fine lady.

Clar. Troth, sir, on second thoughts I begin to be a little better reconciled to your assurance; 'tis in some sort modesty to deny yourself; for to own your perjuries to my face, had been an insolence transcendently provoking.

At. Really, madam, my not being able to apprehend one word of all this, is a great inconvenience to my affair with your cousin: but if you will first do me the honour to make me acquainted with her name and family, I don't much care if I do take a little pains afterwards to come to a right understanding with you.

Clar. Come, come, since you see this assurance will do you no good, you had better put on a sim-

ple look, and generously confeſs your frailties: the ſame slyneſs that deceived me first, will still find me woman enough to pardon you.

At. That bite won't do. [*Aside.*] Sure, madam, you mistake me for some other person.

Clar. Insolent! audacious villain! I am not to have my senses then!

At. No. [*Aside.*

Clar. And you are resolved to stand it to the last!

At. The last extremity. [*Aside.*

Clar. Well, sir, since you are so much a stranger to Colonel Standfast, I'll tell you where to find him, and tell him this from me; I hate him, scorn, detest, and loath him: I never meant him but at best for my diversion, and should he ever renew his dull addreſses to me, I'll have him used as his vain insolence deserves. Now, sir, I have no more to say, and I desire you would leave the house immediately.

At. I would not willingly disoblige you, madam, but 'tis impoſsible to stir till I have seen your cousin, and cleared myself of these strange aspersions.

Clar. Don't flatter yourself, sir, with so vain a hope, for I must tell you, once for all, you've seen the last of her; and if you won't be gone, you'll oblige me to have you forced away.

At. I'll be even with you. [*Aside*] Well, madam, since I find nothing can prevail upon your cruelty, I'll take my leave: but as you hope for justice on the man that wrongs you, at least be faithful to your lovely friend. And when you have named to her my utmost guilt, yet paint my paſsion as it is, sincere. Tell her what tortures I endured in this severe exclusion from her sight, that till my innocence is clear to her, and she again receives me into mercy,

A madman's frenzy's heav'n to what I feel;
The wounds you give 'tis she alone can heal.

[*Exit.*

Clar. Most abandoned impudence! And yet I know not which vexes me most, his out-facing my senses, or his insolent owning his paſsion for

my cousin to my face: 'tis impossible she could put him upon this, it must be all his own; but be it as it will, by all that's woman I'll have revenge.

[*Exit.*

Re-enter ATALL *and Lady* SADLIFE *at the other Side.*

At. Hey-day! is there no way down stairs here? Death! I can't find my way out! This is the oddest house——

L. Sad. Here he is—I'll venture to pass by him.

At. Pray, madam, which is the nearest way out?

L. Sad. Sir, out—— a——

At. Oh, my stars! is't you, madam, this is fortunate indeed—I beg you'll tell me, do you live here, madam?

L. Sad. Not very far off, sir: but this is no place to talk with you alone—indeed I must beg your pardon.

At. By all those kindling charms that fire my soul, no consequence on earth shall make me quit my hold, till you've given me some kind assurance that I shall see you again, and speedily; 'egad I'll have one out of the family at least.

L. Sad. Oh, good, here's company!

At. Oh, do not rack me with delays, but quick, before this dear short-lived opportunity's lost, inform me where you live, or kill me: to part with this soft white hand is ten thousand daggers to my heart. [*Kissing it eagerly.*

L. Sad. Oh, lud! I am going home this minute; and if you should offer to dog my chair, I protest I——was ever such usage——lord——sure! Oh——follow me down then. [*Exeunt.*

Re-enter CLARINDA, *and* SYLVIA.

Syl. Ha, ha, ha!

Clar. Nay, you may laugh, madam, but what I tell you is true.

Syl. Ha, ha, ha!

Clar. You don't believe then?

Syl. I do believe, that when some women are inclined to like a man, nothing more palpably discovers it, than their railing at him; ha, ha!—You

pardon, cousin; you know you laughed at me just now upon the same occasion.

Clar. The occasion's quite different, madam; I hate him. And, once more I tell you, he's a villain, you're imposed on. He's a colonel of foot, his regiment's now in Spain, and his name's Standfast.

Syl. But pray, good cousin, whence had you this intelligence of him?

Clar. From the same place that you had your false account, madam, his own mouth.

Syl. What was his business with you?

Clar. Much about the same, as his business with you——love.

Syl. Love! to you!

Clar. Me, madam! Lord, what am I? Old, or a monster! Is it so prodigious that a man should like me?

Syl. No! but I'm amazed to think, if he had liked you, he should leave you so soon, for me!

Clar. For you! leave me for you! No, madam, I did not tell you that neither! ha, ha!

Syl. No! What made you so violently angry with him then? Indeed, cousin, you had better take some other fairer way; this artifice is much too weak to make me break with him. But, however, to let you see I can be still a friend; prove him to be what you say he is, and my engagements with him shall soon be over.

Clar. Look you, madam, not but I slight the tenderest of his addresses; but to convince you that my vanity was not mistaken in him, I'll write to him by the name of Colonel Standfast, and do you the same by that of Freeman; and let's each appoint him to meet us at my Lady Sadlife's at the same time: if these appear two different men, I think our dispute's easily at an end; if but one, and he does not own all I have said of him to your face, I'll make you a very humble courtesy, and beg your pardon.

Syl. And if he does own it, I'll make your ladyship the same reverence, and beg yours.

Enter CLERIMONT.

Clar. Psha! he here!

Cler. I am glad to find you in such good company, madam.

Clar. One's seldom long in good company, sir.

Cler. I am sorry mine has been so troublesome of late; but I value your ease at too high a rate to disturb it. [*Going.*

Syl. Nay, Mr. Clerimont, upon my word you sha'n't stir. Hark you—[*Whispers.*] Your pardon, cousin.

Clar. I must not lose him neither—Mr. Clerimont's way is, to be severe in his construction of people's meaning.

Syl. I'll write my letter, and be with you, cousin. [*Exit.*

Cler. It was always my principle, madam, to have an humble opinion of my merit; when a woman of sense frowns upon me, I ought to think I deserve it.

Clar. But to expect to be always received with a smile, I think, is having a very extraordinary opinion of one's merit.

Cler. We differ a little as to fact, madam: for these ten day's past, I have had no distinction, but a severe reservedness. You did not use to be so sparing of your good-humour; and while I see you gay to all the world but me, I can't but be a little concerned at the change.

Clar. If he has discovered the colonel now, I'm undone! he could not meet him, sure.——I must humour him a little. [*Aside.*] Men of your sincere temper, Mr. Clerimont, I own, don't always meet with the usage they deserve: but women are giddy things, and had we no errors to answer for, the use of good-nature in a lover would be lost. Vanity is our inherent weakness: you must not chide, if we are sometimes fonder of your passions than your prudence.

Cler. This friendly condescension makes me more your slave than ever. Oh, yet be kind, and tell me, have I been tortured with a groundless jealousy?

Clar. Let your own heart be judge——but don't take it ill if I leave you now—I have some earnest business with my cousin Sylvia: but to-night, at my Lady Dainty's, I'll make you amends; you'll be there.

Cler. I need not promise you.

Clar. Your servant.—Ah, how easily is poor sincerity imposed on! Now for the colonel. [*Aside.*

[*Exit.*

Cler. This unexpected change of humour more stirs my jealousy than all her late severity.——I'll watch her close;

For she that from a just reproach is kind,
Gives more suspicion of her guilty mind,
And throws her smiles, like dust, to strike the lover blind.

[Exeunt.

ACT III.

SCENE I. Lady Dainty's *Apartment: a Table, with Phials, Gallipots, Glasses, &c.*

Lady DAINTY, *and* SITUP *her Woman.*

L. Dain. Situp! Situp!

Sit. Madam!

L. Dain. Thou art strangely slow; I told thee the hartshorn; I have the vapours to that degree!

Sit. If your ladyship would take my advice you should e'en fling your physic out of the window; if you were not in perfect health in three days, I'd be bound to be sick for you.

L. Dain. Peace, goody impertinence! I tell thee, no woman of quality is, or should be in perfect health——Huh, huh! [*Coughs faintly.*] To be always in health is as vulgar as to be always in humour, and would equally betray one's want of wit and breeding:——where are the fellows?

Sit. Here, madam——

Enter Two FOOTMEN.

L. Dain. Cæsar!—run to my Lady Roundsides; desire to know how she rested; and tell her the violence of my cold is abated: huh, huh! Pompey, step you to my Lady Killchairman's; give my service; say, I have been so embarrassed with the spleen all this morning, that I am under the greatest uncertainty in the world, whether I shall be able to stir out or no—And, d'ye hear; desire to know how my lord does, and the new monkey——

[*Exeunt Footman.*

Sit. In my conscience, these great ladies make themselves sick to make themselves business; and are well or ill, only in ceremony to one another.

[*Aside.*

L. Dain. Where's t'other fellow?

Sit. He is not returned yet, madam.

L. Dain 'Tis indeed a strange lump, not fit to carry a disease to any body; I sent him t'other day to the Dutchess of Diet-Drink with the cholic, and the brute put it into his own tramontane language, and called it the belly-ach.

Sit. I wish your ladyship had not occasion to send for any; for my part——

L. Dain. Thy part!—— prithee, thou wert made of the rough masculine kind; 'tis betraying our sex not to be sickly and tender. All the families I visit have something derived to them from the elegant nice state of indisposition; you see, even in the men, a genteel, as it were, stagger, or twine of the bodies; as if they were not yet confirmed enough for the rough laborious exercise of walking, "a lazy saunter in their motion, something so "quality! and their voices so soft and low, you'd "think they were falling asleep, they are so very "delicate.

"*Sit.* But, methinks, madam, it would be better "if the men were not altogether so tender.

"*L. Dain.* Indeed, I have sometimes wished the "creatures were not, but that the niceness of their "frame so much distinguishes them from the herd "of common people:" nay, even most of their diseases, you see, are not prophaned by the crow

the apoplexy, the gout, and vapours, are all peculiar to the nobility.——Huh, huh! and I could almost wish, that colds were only ours;——there's something in them so genteel, so agreeably disordering——huh, huh!

Sit. That, I hope, I shall never be fit for them—— Your ladyship forgot the spleen.

L. Dain. Oh!——my dear spleen——I grudge that even to some of us.

Sit. I knew an ironmonger's wife, in the city, that was mightily troubled with it.

L. Dain. Foh! What a creature hast thou named! An ironmonger's wife have the spleen! Thou mightest as well have said her husband was a fine gentleman——Give me something.

Sit. Will your ladyship please to take any of the steel drops? or the bolus? or the electuary? or——

L. Dain. This wench will smother me with questions——huh, huh! bring any of them——these healthy sluts are so boisterous, they split one's brains: I fancy myself in an inn while she talks to me; I must have some decayed person of quality about me; for the commons of England are the strangest creatures——huh, huh!

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Mrs. Sylvia, madam, is come to wait on your ladyship.

L. Dain. Desire her to walk in; let the physic alone: I'll take a little of her company; she's mighty good for the spleen.

Enter SYLVIA.

Syl. Dear Lady Dainty!

L. Dain. My good creature, I'm overjoyed to see you—huh, huh!

Syl. I am sorry to see your ladyship wrapt up thus; I was in hopes to have had your company to the India house.

L. Dain. If any thing could tempt me abroad, 'twould be that place, and such agreeable company; but how came you, dear Sylvia, to be reconciled to any thing in an Indian house? you used to have a

most barbarous inclination for our own odious manufactures.

Syl. Nay, madam, I am only going to recruit my tea-table: as to the rest of their trumpery, I am as much out of humour with it as ever.

L. Dain. Well, thou art a pleasant creature, thy distaste is so diverting.

Syl. And your ladyship is so expensive, that really I am not able to come into it.

L. Dain. Now it is to me prodigious! how some women can muddle away their money upon housewifery, children, books, and charities, when there are so many well-bred ways, and foreign curiosities, that more elegantly require it—I have every morning the rarities of all countries brought to me, and am in love with every new thing I see.—Are the people come yet, Situp?

Sit. They have been below, madam, this half hour.

L. Dain. Dispose them in the parlour, and we'll be there presently. [*Exit Situp.*

Syl. How can your ladyship take such pleasure in being cheated with the baubles of other countries?

L. Dain. Thou art a very infidel to all finery.

Syl. And you are a very bigot—

L. Dain. A person of all reason, and no complaisance.

Syl. And your ladyship all complaisance, and no reason.

L. Dain. Follow me, and be converted.

[*Exeunt.*

Re-enter SITUP, *a Woman with China Ware; an Indian Man with Screens, Tea, &c. a Bird-man with a Paroquet, Monkey, &c.*

Sit. Come, come into this room.

Chi. I hope your ladyship's lady won't be long in coming.

Sit. I don't care if she never comes to you.—— It seems you trade with the ladies for old clothes, and give them china for their gowns and petti-

coats; I'm like to have a fine time on't with such creatures as you indeed!

Chi. Alas, madam, I'm but a poor woman, and am forced to do any thing to live: will your ladyship be pleased to accept of a piece of china?

Sit. Puh! no;—I don't care.—Though I must needs say you look like an honest woman.

[*Looking on it.*

Chi. Thank you, good madam.

Sit. Our places are like to come to a fine pass indeed, if our ladies must buy their china with our perquisites: at this rate, my lady sha'n't have an old fan, or a glove! but———.

Chi. Pray, madam, take it.

Sit. No, not I; I won't have it, especially without a saucer to't. Here, take it again.

Chi. Indeed you shall accept of it.

Sit. Not I, truly—come, give it me, give it me;—here's my lady.

Enter Lady DAINTY, *and* SYLVIA.

L. Dain. Well, my dear, is not this a pretty sight now?

Syl. It's better than so many doctors and apothecaries, indeed.

L. Dain. All trades must live, you know; and those no more than these could subsist, if the world were all wise, or healthy.

Syl. I am afraid our real diseases are but few to our imaginary, and doctors get more by the sound than the sickly.

L. Dain. My dear, you're allowed to say any thing—but now I must talk with the people.——Have you got any thing new there?

Chi. Ind. and Bird. Yes, an't please your ladyship.

L. Dain. One at once.———

Bird. I have brought your ladyship the finest monkey———

Syl. What a filthy thing it is!

L. Dain. Now I think he looks very humorous and agreeable—I vow in a white periwig he might do mischief. Could he but talk and take snuff, e's ne'er a fop in town would go beyond him.

Syl. Most fops would go farther if they did not speak; but talking, indeed, makes them very often worse company than monkies.

L. Dain. Thou pretty little picture of man!——How very Indian he looks!——I could kiss the dear creature!

Syl. Ah, don't touch him! he'll bite!

Bird. No, madam, he is the tamest you ever saw, and the least mischievous.

L. Dain. Then take him away, I won't have him; for mischief is the wit of a monkey; and I would not give a farthing for one that would not break me three or four pounds worth of china in a morning. Oh, I am in love with these Indian figures!—Do but observe what an innocent natural simplicity there is in all the actions of them.

Chi. These are Pagods, madam, that the Indians worship.

L. Dain. So far I am an Indian.

Syl. Now to me they are all monsters.

L. Dain. Profane creature!

Chi. Is your ladyship for a piece of right Flanders lace?

L. Dain. Um—no; I don't care for it, now it is not prohibited.

Ind. Will your ladyship be pleased to have a pound of fine tea?

L. Dain. What, filthy, odious bohea, I suppose?

Ind. No, madam; right Kappakawawa.

L. Dain. Well, there's something in the very sound of that name, that makes it irresistible.——What is it a pound?

Ind. But six guineas, madam.

L. Dain. How infinitely cheap! I'll buy it all——Sirrup, take the man in and pay him, and let the rest call again to-morrow.

Omnes. Bless your ladyship.

[*Exeunt Sir. Chi. Ind. and Bird.*

L. Dain. Lord, how feverish I am!—the least motion does so disorder me—do but feel me.

Syl. No, really, I think you are in very good temper.

L. Dain. Burning, indeed, child.

Enter SERVANT, DOCTOR, *and* APOTHECARY.

Serv. Madam, here's Doctor Bolus, and the apothecary. [*Exit.*

L. Dain. Oh, doctor, I'm glad you're come; one is not sure of a moment's life without you.

Dr. How did your ladyship rest, madam?

[*Feels her Pulse.*

L. Dain. Never worse, indeed, doctor: I once fell into a little slumber, indeed, but then was disturbed by the most odious, frightful dream, that if the fright had not wakened me, I had certainly perished in my sleep, with the apprehension.

Dr. A certain sign of a disordered brain, madam; but I'll order something that shall compose your ladyship.

L. Dain. Mr. Rhubarb, I must quarrel with you ——you don't disguise your medicines enough; they taste all physic.

Rhub. To alter it more might offend the operation, madam.

L. Dain. I don't care what is offended, so my taste is not.

Dr. Hark you, Mr. Rhubarb, withdraw the medicine, rather than to make it pleasant: I'll find a reason for the want of its operation.

Rhub. But, sir, if we don't look about us, she'll grow well upon our hands.

Dr. Never fear that; she's too much a woman of quality to dare to be well without her doctor's opinion.

Rhub. Sir, we have drained the whole catalogue of diseases already; there's not another left to put in her head.

Dr. Then I'll make her go them over again.

Enter CARELESS.

Care. So here's the old levee, doctor and apothecary in close consultation! Now will I demolish the quack and his medicines before her face.—— Mr. Rhubarb, your servant. Pray what have you got in your hand there?

Rhub. Only a julep and composing draught for my lady, sir.

Care. Have you so, sir? Pray, let me see—I'll prescribe to-day. Doctor, you may go—the lady shall take no physic at present but me.

Dr. Sir——

Care. Nay, if you won't believe me——

[*Breaks the Phials.*

L. Dain. Ah!——

[*Frighted, and leaning upon Sylvia.*

Dr. Come away, Mr. Rhubarb—he'll certainly put her out of order, and then she'll send for us again. [*Exit Doctor and Apothecary.*

Care. You see, madam, what pains I take to come into your favour.

L. Dain. You take a very preposterous way, I can tell you, sir.

Care. I can't tell how I succeed, but I am sure I endeavour right; for I study every morning new impertinence to entertain you: for since I find nothing but dogs, doctors, and monkies are your favourites, it is very hard if your ladyship won't admit me as one of the number.

L. Dain. When I find you of an equal merit with my monkey, you shall be in the same state of favour. I confess, as a proof of your wit, you have done me as much mischief here. But you have not half pug's judgment, nor his spirit; for the creature will do a world of pleasant things, without caring whether one likes them or not.

Care. Why, truly, madam, the little gentleman, my rival, I believe, is much in the right on't: and, if you observe, I have taken as much pains of late to disoblige, as to please you.

L. Dain. You succeed better in one than t'other, I can tell you, sir.

Care. I am glad on't; for if you had not me now and then to plague you, what would you do for a pretence to be chagrined, to faint, have the spleen, the vapours, and all those disorders that so nicely distinguish a woman of quality?

L. Dain. I am perfectly confounded!—Certainly there are some people too impudent for our resentment.

Care. Modesty's a starving virtue, madam, an old threadbare fashion of the last age, and w

sit as oddly on a lover now, as a picked beard and mustachios.

L. Dain. Most astonishing!

Care. I have tried sighing and looking silly a great while, but 'twould not do—nay, had you had as little wit as good-nature, should have proceeded to dance and sing. Tell me but how, what face or form can worship you, and behold your votary.

L. Dain. Not, sir, as the Persians do the sun, with your face towards me. The best proof you can give me of your horrid devotion, is never to see me more. Come, my dear. [*Exit with Sylvia.*

Syl. I'm amazed so much assurance should not succeed. [*Exit.*

Care. All this sha'n't make me out of love with my virtue. Impudence has ever been a successful quality, and 'twould be hard, indeed, if I should be the first that did not thrive by it. [*Exit.*

SCENE II. Clerimont's *Lodgings.*

Enter ATALL, *and* FINDER, *his Man.*

At. You are sure you know the house again?

Fin. Ah, as well as I do the upper gallery, sir. ——'Tis Sir Solomon Sadlife's, at the two glass lanthorns, within three doors of my Lord Duke's.

At. Very well, sir—then take this letter, enquire for my Lady Sadlife's woman, and stay for an answer.

Fin. Yes, sir, [*Exit.*

At. Well, I find 'tis as ridiculous to propose pleasure in love without variety of mistresses, as to pretend to be a keen sportsman without a good stable of horses. How this lady may prove I can't tell; but if she is not a deedy tit at the bottom, I'm no jockey.

Re-enter FINDER.

Fin. Sir, here are two letters for you.

At. Who brought them?

Fin. A couple of footmen, and they both desire an answer.

At. Bid them stay, and do you make haste where you go.

Fin. Yes, sir. [*Exit.*

At. To Colonel Standfast—that's Clarinda's hand—To Mr. Freeman—that must be my incognita. Ah, I have most mind to open this first;—but if t'other malicious creature should have perverted her growing inclination to me, 'twould put my whole frame in a trembling——Hold, I'll guess my fate by degrees—this may give me a glimpse of it. [*Reads Clarinda's Letter.*] Um—um—um—Ha! To meet her at my Lady Sadlife's at seven o'clock to-night, and take no manner of notice of my late disowning myself to her—Something's at the bottom of all this.——Now to solve the riddle. [*Reads the other Letter.*] 'My cousin Clarinda has told some things of you that very much alarm me; but I am willing to suspend my belief of them till I see you, which I desire may be at my Lady Sadlife's at seven this evening.'—The devil! the same place!—'As you value the real friendship of your

'INCOGNITA.'

So, now the riddle's out—the rival queens are fairly come to a reference, and one or both of them I must lose, that's positive.——Hard!

Enter CLERIMONT.

Hard fortune! Now, poor Impudence, what will become of thee? Oh, Clerimont, such a complication of adventures since I saw thee! such sweet hopes, fears, and unaccountable difficulties, sure never poor dog was surrounded with.

Cler. Oh, you are an industrious person! you'll get over them. But, pray, let's hear.

At. To begin, then, in the climax of my misfortunes:—In the first place, the private lodgings that my incognita appointed to receive me in, prove to be the very individual habitation of my other mistress, whom (to complete the blunder of my ill luck) she civilly introduced in person, to recommend me to her better acquaintance.

Cler. Ha, ha! Death! how could you stand them both together?

At. The old way—buff—I stuck like a burr to my name of Freeman, addressed my incognita before the other's face, and with a most unmoved go

breeding, harmleſsly faced her down I had never seen her in my life before.

Cler. The prettiest modesty I ever heard of! Well, but how did they discover you at last?

At. Why, faith, the matter's yet in suspense; and I find by both their letters, that they don't yet well know what to think: (but, to go on with my luck,) you must know, they have since both appointed me, by several names, to meet them at one and the same place, at seven o'clock this evening.

Cler. Ah!

At. And, lastly, to crown my fortune (as if the devil himself most triumphantly rode a-straddle upon my ruin) the fatal place of their appointment happens to be the very house of a third lady, with whom I made an acquaintance since morning, and had just before sent word I would visit near the same hour this evening.

Cler. Oh, murder! Poor Atall, thou art really fallen under the last degree of compaſsion.

At. And yet, with a little of thy aſsistance, in the middle of their small-shot, I don't still despair of holding my head above water.

Cler. Death! but you can't meet them both; you must lose one of them, unleſs you can split yourself.

At. Prithee, don't suspect my courage or my modesty; for I'm resolved to go on, if you will stand by me.

Cler. Faith, my very curiosity would make me do that. But what can I do?

At. You must appear for me, upon occasion, in person.

Cler. With all my heart. What else?

At. I shall want a queen's meſsenger in my interest, or rather one that can personate one.

Cler. That's easily found—But what to do?

At. Come along, and I'll tell you; for first I must answer their letters.

Cler. Thou art an original, faith. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. Changes to Sir Solomon's *House.*

Enter Sir SOLOMON *leading Lady* SADLIFE, *and* WISHWELL, *her Woman.*

Sir Sol. There, madam, let me have no more of these airings.—No good, I am sure, can keep a woman five or six hours abroad in a morning.

L. Sad. You deny me all the innocent freedoms of life.

Sir Sol. Ha! you have the modish cant of this end of the town, I see; intriguing, gaming, gadding, and party-quarries, with a pox to them, are innocent freedoms, forsooth!

L. Sad. I don't know what you mean; I'm sure I have not one acquaintance in the world that does an ill thing.

Sir Sol. They must be better looked after than your ladyship then; but I'll mend my hands as fast as I can. Do you look to your reputation henceforward, and I'll take care of your person.

L. Sad. You wrong my virtue with these unjust suspicions.

Sir Sol. Ay, it's no matter for that; better I wrong it than you. I'll secure my doors for this day at least. [*Exit.*

L. Sad. Oh, Wishwell! what shall I do?

Wish. What's the matter, madam?

L. Sad. I expect a letter from a gentleman every minute; and if it should fall into Sir Solomon's hands, I'm ruined past redemption.

Wish. He won't suspect it, madam, sure, if they are directed to me, as they used to be.

L. Sad. But his jealousy's grown so violent of late, there's no trusting to it now. If he meets it, I shall be locked up for ever.

Wish. Oh, dear madam? I vow your ladyship frights me—Why, he'll kill me for keeping counsel.

L. Sad. Run to the window, quick, and watch the messenger. [*Exit Wish.*] Ah, there's my ruin near! —I feel it—[*A knocking at the Door.*]——What shall I do? Be very insolent, or very humble, or cry?—I have known some women, upon these

casions, outstrut their husbands' jealousy, and make them ask pardon for finding them out. Oh, lud, here he comes!—I can't do't; my courage fails me——I must e'en stick to my handkerchief, and trust to nature.

Re-enter Sir SOLOMON, *taking a Letter from* FINDER.

Sir Sol. Sir, I shall make bold to read this letter; and if you have a mind to save your bones, there's your way out.

Fin. Oh, terrible! I sha'n't have a whole one in my skin, when I come home to my master. [*Exit.*

L. Sad. [*Aside.*] I'm lost for ever!

Sir Sol. [*Reads.*] 'Pardon, most divine creature, the impatience of my heart,'—Very well! these are her innocent freedoms! Ah, cockatrice!—'which languishes for an opportunity to convince you of its sincerity;'——Oh, the tender son of a whore!——'which nothing could relieve, but the sweet hope of seeing you this evening.'—Poor lady, whose virtue I have wronged with unjust suspicions!

L. Sad. I'm ready to sink with apprehension.

Sir Sol. [*Reads.*] 'To-night, at seven, expect your dying Strephon.'—Die, and be damn'd; for I'll remove your comforter, by cutting her throat. I could find in my heart to ram his impudent letter into her windpipe——Ha! what's this!——'To Mrs. Wishwell, my Lady Sadlife's woman.'——Ad, I'm glad of it, with all my heart! What a happy thing it is to have one's jealousy disappointed!—Now have I been cursing my poor wife for the mistaken wickedness of that trollop. 'Tis well I kept my thoughts to myself: for the virtue of a wife, when wrongfully accused, is most unmercifully insolent. Come, I'll do a great thing; I'll kiss her, and make her amends——What's the matter, my dear? Has any thing frighted you?

L. Sad. Nothing but your hard usage.

Sir Sol. Come, come, dry thy tears; it shall be so no more. But, hark ye, I have made a discovery here—Your Wishwell, I'm afraid, is a slut; she has an intrigue.

Sad. An intrigue! Heavens, in our family!

Sir Sol. Read there—I wish she be honest.

L. Sad. How!——If there be the least ground to think it, Sir Solomon, positively she sha'n't stay a minute in the house—Impudent creature!—have an affair with a man!

Sir Sol. But hold, my dear; don't let your virtue censure too severely neither.

L. Sad. I shudder at the thoughts of her.

Sir Sol. Patience, I say—How do we know but his courtship may be honourable?

L. Sad. That, indeed, requires some pause.

Wish. [*Peeping in.*] So, all's safe, I see—He thinks the letter's to me——Oh, good madam! that letter was to me, the fellow says. I wonder, sir, how you could serve one so! If my sweetheart should hear you had opened it, I know he would not have me, so he would not.

Sir Sol. Never fear that; for if he is in love with you, he's too much a fool to value being laughed at.

L. Sad. If it be yours, here, take your stuff; and next time, bid him take better care, than to send his letter so publicly.

Wish. Yes, madam. But now your ladyship has read it, I'd fain beg the honour of Sir Solomon to answer it for me; for I can't write.

L. Sad. Not write!

Sir Sol. Nay, he thinks she's above that, I suppose; for he calls her divine creature——A pretty piece of divinity, truly!——But, come, my dear; 'egad, we'll answer it for her. Here's paper——you shall do it.

L. Sad. I, Sir Solomon! Lard, I won't write to fellows, not I———I hope he won't take me at my word. [*Aside.*

Sir Sol. Nay, you shall do it. Come, it will get her a good husband.

Wish. Ay, pray good madam, do.

Sir Sol. Ah, how eager the jade is!

L. Sad. I can't tell how to write to any body but you, my dear.

Sir Sol. Well, well, I'll dictate then. Come, begin.

L. Sad. Lard, this is the oddest fancy !——
[*Sits to write.*

Sir Sol. Come, come——Dear sir—(for we'll be as loving as he, for his ears.)

Wish. No, pray madam, begin, Dear honey, or, My dearest angel.

L. Sad. Out, you fool! you must not be so fond —Dear sir, is very well. [*Writes.*

Sir Sol. Ay, ay, so 'tis; but these young fillies are for setting out at the top of their speed. But, prithee, Wishwell, what is thy lover? for the style of his letter may serve for a countefs!

Wish. Sir, he's but a butler at present; but he's a good schollard, as you may see by his hand-writing; and in time may come to be a steward; and then we sha'n't be long without a coach, sir.

L. Sad. Dear sir——What must I write next?

Sir Sol. Why—— [*Musing.*

Wish. Hoping you are in good health, as I am at this present writing.

Sir Sol. You puppy, he'll laugh at you.

Wish. I'm sure my mother used to begin all her letters so.

Sir Sol. And thou art every inch of thee her own daughter, that I'll say for thee.

L. Sad. Come, I have done it. [*Reads.*] 'Dear sir, She must have very little merit that is insensible of yours.'

Sir Sol. Very well, faith! Write all yourself.

Wish. Ay, good madam, do; that's better than mine. But, pray, dear madam, let it end with, So I rest your dearest loving friend, till death us do part.

L. Sad. [*Aside.*] This absurd slut will make me laugh out.

Sir Sol. But, hark you, hufsy; suppose now you should be a little scornful and insolent to shew your breeding, and a little ill-natured in it to shew your wit.

Wish. Ay, sir, that is, if I designed him for my gallant; but since he is to be but my husband, I must be very good-natured and civil before I have him— and huff him, and shew my wit after.

Sir Sol. Here's a jade for you! [*Aside.*] But why must you huff your husband, hufsy?

Wish. Oh, sir, that's to give him a good opinion of my virtue! for you know, sir, a husband can't think one could be so very domineering, if one were not very honest.

Sir Sol. 'Shud, this fool, on my conscience, speaks the sense of the whole sex! [*Aside.*

Wish. Then, sir, I have been told, that a husband loves one the better, the more one hectors him; as a spaniel does, the more one beats him.

Sir Sol. Ha! thy husband will have a bleſsed time on't.

L. Sad. So——I have done.

Wish. Oh, pray madam, read it!

L. Sad. [*Reads.*] 'Dear sir—She must have very little merit that is insensible of yours; and while you continue to love, and tell me so, expect whatever you can hope from so much wit, and such unfeigned sincerity——At the hour you mention, you will be truly welcome to your paſsionate——'

Wish. Oh, madam, it is not half kind enough! Pray, put in some more dears.

Sir Sol. Ay, ay, sweeten it well; let it be all syrup, with a pox to her.

Wish. Every line should have a dear sweet sir in it, so it should——he'll think I don't love him else.

Sir Sol. Poor moppet!

L. Sad. No, no, 'tis better now—Well, what must be at the bottom, to answer Strephon?

Sir Sol. Pray, let her divine ladyship sign Abigail.

Wish. No, pray, madam, put down Lipsamintha.

Sir Sol. Lipsamintha!

L. Sad. No, come, I'll write Celia. Here, go in and seal it.

Sir Sol. Ay, come, I'll lend you a wafer, that he may'n't wait for your divinityship.

Wish. Pshaw! you always flout one so.

[*Exeunt Sir Sol. and Wish.*

L. Sad. So, this is luckily over——Well, I see, a woman should never be discouraged from coming

off at the greatest plunge; for though I was half dead with the fright, yet, now I am a little recovered, I find——

That apprehension does the bliss endear;
The real danger's nothing to the fear. [Exit.

ACT IV.

SCENE I. Sir Solomon's.

Enter Lady SADLIFE, ATALL, *and* WISHWELL, *with Lights.*

L. Sad. This room, I think, is pleasanter; if you please, we'll sit here, sir———Wishwell, shut the door, and take the key o' th' inside, and set chairs.

Wish. Yes, madam.

L. Sad. Lard, sir, what a strange opinion you must have of me, for receiving your visits upon so slender an acquaintance.

At. I have a much stranger opinion, madam, of your ordering your servant to lock herself in with us.

L Sad. Oh, you would not have us wait upon ourselves!

At. Really, madam, I can't conceive that two lovers, alone, have much occasion for attendance.

[*They sit.*

L. Sad. Lovers! Lard, how you talk! Can't people converse without that stuff?

At. Um—Yes, madam, people may; but without a little of that stuff, conversation is generally very apt to be insipid.

L. Sad. Pooh! why, we can say any thing without her hearing, you see.

At. Ay; but if we should talk ourselves up to an occasion of being without her, it would look worse to send her out, than to have let her wait without when she was out.

L. Sad. You are pretty hard to please, I find,

sir. Some men, I believe, would think themselves well used in so free a reception as yours.

At. Ha! I see this is like to come to nothing this time; so I'll e'en put her out of humour, that I may get off in time to my incognita. [*Aside.*] Really, madam, I can never think myself free, where my hand and my tongue are tied. [*Pointing to Wish.*

L. Sad. Your conversation, I find, is very different from what it was, sir.

At. With submission, madam, I think it very proper for the place we are in. If you had sent for me only to sip tea, to sit still, and be civil, with my hat under my arm, like a strange relation from Ireland, or so, why was I brought hither with so much caution and privacy?

[*Sir Solomon knocks at the Door.*

Wish. Oh, heavens, my master, madam!

Sir Sol. [*Within.*] Open the door there!

L. Sad. What shall we do?

At. Nothing now, I'm sure.

L. Sad. Open the door, and say the gentleman came to you.

Wish. Oh, lud, madam, I shall never be able to manage it at so short a warning!——We had better shut the gentleman into the closet, and say he came to nobody at all.

L. Sad. In, in then, for mercy's sake, quickly, sir!

At. So—this is like to be very pretty business! ——Oh, success and impudence, thou hast quite forsaken me! [*Enters the Closet.*

Wish. Do you step into your bed-chamber, madam, and leave my master to me.

[*Exit Lady Sadlife.*

WISHWELL *opens the Door, and Sir* SOLOMON *enters.*

Sir Sol. What's the reason, mistress, I am to be locked out of my wife's apartment?

Wish. My lady was washing her—her—neck, sir, and I could not come any sooner.

Sir Sol. I'm sure I heard a man's voice. [*Aside.*] Bid your lady come hither. [*Exit Wishwell.*]—— He must be hereabouts——'tis so; all's out, all's

over now: the devil has done his worst, and I am a cuckold in spite of my wisdom. 'Sbud! now an Italian would poison his wife for this, a Spaniard would stab her, and a Turk would cut off her head with a scymitar; but a poor dog of an English cuckold now can only squabble and call names—— Hold, here she comes——I must smother my jealousy, that her guilt mayn't be upon its guard.

Enter Lady SADLIFE *and* WISHWELL.

Sir Sol. My dear, how do you do? Come hither, and kiss me.

L. Sad. I did not expect you home so soon, my dear.

Sir Sol. Poor rogue!——I don't believe you did, with a pox to you. [*Aside.*] Wishwell, go down; I have business with your lady.

Wish. Yes, sir—but I'll watch you; for I am afraid this good-humour has mischief at the bottom of it. [*Retires.*

L. Sad. I scarce know whether he's jealous or not.

Sir Sol. Now dare not I go near that closet door, lest the murderous dog should poke a hole in my guts through the key-hole.——Um——I have an old thought in my head——ay, and that will discover the whole bottom of her affair. 'Tis better to seem not to know one's dishonour, when one has not courage enough to revenge it.

L. Sad. I don't like his looks, methinks.

Sir Sol. Odso! what have I forgot now? Prithee, my dear, step into my study; for I am so weary! and in the uppermost parcel of letters, you'll find one that I received from Yorkshire to-day, in the scrutoire; bring it down, and some paper; I will answer it while I think on't.

L. Sad. If you please to lend me your key—But had you not better write in your study, my dear?

Sir Sol. No, no; I tell you, I'm so tired, I am not able to walk. There, make haste.

L. Sad. Would all were well over! [*Exit.*

Sir Sol. 'Tis so, by her eagerness to be rid of me. Well, since I find I dare not behave myself like a man of honour in this business, I'll at least act like

a person of prudence and penetration; for say, should I clap a brace of slugs now in the very bowels of this rascal, it may hang me; but if it does not, it can't divorce me. No, I'll e'en put out the candles, and in a soft, gentle whore's voice, desire the gentleman to walk about his business; and if I can get him out before my wife returns, I'll fairly post myself in his room; and so, when she comes to set him at liberty, in the dark, I'll humour the cheat, till I draw her into some casual confession of the fact, and then this injured front shall bounce upon her like a thunder-bolt.

[*Puts out the Candles.*

Wish. [*Behind.*] Say you so, sir? I'll take care my lady shall be provided for you. [*Exit.*

Sir Sol. Hist, hist, sir, sir!

Enter ATALL *from the Closet.*

At. Is all clear? May I venture, madam?

Sir Sol. Ay, ay, quick, quick! make haste before Sir Solomon returns. A strait-back'd dog, I warrant him. [*Aside.*] But when shall I see you again?

At. Whenever you'll promise me to make a better use of an opportunity.

Sir Sol. Ha! then 'tis possible he mayn't yet have put the finishing stroke to me.

At. Is this the door?

Sir Sol. Ay, ay, away. [*Exit Atall.*] So—now the danger of being murdered is over, I find my courage returns: and if I catch my wife but inclining to be no better than she should be, I'm not sure that blood won't be the consequence.

He goes into the Closet, and WISHWELL *enters.*

Wish. So—my lady has her cue; and if my wise master can give her no better proofs of his penetration than this, she'd be a greater fool than he if she should not do what she has a mind to. Sir, sir, come, you may come out now; Sir Solomon's gone.

Enter Sir SOLOMON *from the Closet.*

Sir Sol. So, now for a soft speech, to set her in-

pudent blood in a ferment, and then let it out with my penknife. [*Aside.*] Come, dear creature, now let's make the kindest use of our opportunity.

Wish. Nor for the world. If Sir Solomon should come again, I should be ruined. Pray, begone—I'll send to you to-morrow.

Sir Sol. Nay, now you love me not; you would not let me part else thus unsatisfied.

Wish. Now you're unkind. You know I love you, or I should not run such hazards for you.

Sir Sol. Fond whore! [*Aside.*] But I'm afraid you love Sir Solomon, and lay up all your tenderneſs for him.

Wish. Oh, ridiculous!——How can so sad a wretch give you the least uneasy thought?——I loath the very sight of him.

Sir Sol. Damn'd, infernal strumpet!——I can bear no longer——Lights, lights, within there!

[*Seizes her.*

Wish. Ah! [*Shricks.*] Who's this? Help! murder!

Sir Sol. No, traitreſs, don't think to 'scape me; for, now I've trapped thee in thy guilt, I could find in my heart to have thee flead alive, thy skin stuffed, and hung up in the middle of Guildhall, as a terrible conſequence of cuckoldom to the whole city—Lights there!

Enter Lady SADLIFE *with a Light.*

L. Sad. Oh, Heavens! what's the matter?

[*Sir Solomon looks astonished.*

Ha! what do I see? My servant on the floor, and Sir Solomon offering rudeneſs to her! Oh, I can't bear it! Oh! [*Falls into a Chair.*

Sir Sol. What has the devil been doing here?

L. Sad. This the reward of all my virtue! Oh, revenge, revenge!

Sir Sol. My dear, my good, virtuous, injured dear, be patient; for here has been such wicked doings—

L. Sad. Oh, torture! Do you own it too? 'Tis well my love protects you. But for this wretch, monster, this sword shall do me justice on her.

[*Runs at Wishwell with Sir Solomon's Sword.*

Sir Sol. Oh, hold, my poor mistaken dear! This horrid jade, the gods can tell, is innocent for me; but she has had, it seems, a strong dog in the closet here: which I suspecting, put myself into his place, and had almost trapped her in the very impudence of her iniquity.

L. Sad. How! I'm glad to find he dares not own 'twas his jealousy of me—— [*Aside.*

Wish. [*Kneeling.*] Dear madam, I hope your ladyship will pardon the liberty I took in your absence, in bringing my lover into your ladyship's chamber; but I did not think you would come home from prayers so soon; and so I was forced to hide him in that closet: but my master suspecting the business, it seems, turned him out unknown to me, and then put himself there, and so had a mind to discover whether there was any harm between us; and so, because he fancied I had been naught with him——

Sir Sol. Ay, my dear; and the jade was so confoundedly fond of me, that I grew out of all patience, and fell upon her like a fury.

L. Sad. Horrid creature!——And does she think to stay a minute in the family after such impudence?

Sir Sol. Hold, my dear——for if this should be the man that is to marry her, you know there may be no harm done yet.

Wish. Yes, it was he indeed, madam.

Sir Sol. [*Aside.*] I must not let the jade be turned away, for fear she should put it in my wife's head that I hid myself to discover her ladyship, and then the devil would not be able to live in the house with her.

Wish. Now, sir, you know what I can tell of you. [*Aside to Sir Solomon.*

Sir Sol. Mum—that's a good girl; there's a guinea for you.

L. Sad. Well, upon your intercession, my dear, I'll pardon her this fault. But, pray, mistress, let me hear of no more such doings. I am so disordered with this fright——Fetch my prayer-book; I'll endeavour to compose myself.

[*Exit Lady Sadlife and Wishwell.*

Sir Sol. Ay, do so; that's my good dear—— What two bleſsed escapes have I had! to find myself no cuckold at last, and, which had been equally terrible, my wife not know I wrongfully suspected her!——Well, at length I am fully convinced of her virtue—and now, if I can but cut off the abominable expence that attends some of her impertinent acquaintance, I shall shew myself a Machiavel.

Re-enter WISHWELL.

Wish. Sir, here's my Lady Dainty come to wait upon my lady.

Sir Sol. I'm sorry for't, with all my heart—Why did you say she was within?

Wish. Sir, she did not ask if she was; but she's never denied to her.

Sir Sol. Gadso! why then, if you please to leave her ladyship to me, I'll begin with her now.

WISHWELL *brings in Lady* DAINTY.

L. Dain. Sir Solomon, your very humble servant.

Sir Sol. Yours, yours, madam.

L. Dain. Where's my lady?

Sir Sol. Where your ladyship very seldom is—— at prayers.

Enter Lady SADLIFE.

L. Sad. My dear Lady Dainty!

L. Dain. Dear madam, I am the happiest person alive in finding your ladyship at home.

Sir Sol. So, now for a torrent of impertinence.

L. Sad. Your ladyship does me a great deal of honour.

L. Dain. I am sure I do myself a great deal of pleasure. I have made at least twenty visits to-day. Oh, I'm quite dead! not but my coach is very easy—yet so much perpetual motion, you know——

Sir Sol. Ah, pox of your disorder!—If I had the providing your equipage, odzooks, you should rumble to your visits in a wheel barrow. [*Aside.*

L. Sad. Was you at my Lady Dutchess's?

L. Dain. A little while.

L. Sad. Had she a great circle?

L. Dain. Extreme——I was not able to bear the breath of so much company.

L. Sad. You did not dine there?

L. Dain. Oh, I can't touch any body's dinner but my own!——and I have almost killed myself this week, for want of my usual glaſs of Tokay, after my ortolans and Muscovy duck-eggs.

Sir Sol. 'Sbud, if I had the feeding of you, I'd bring you, in a fortnight, to neck-beef, and a pot of plain bub. [*Aside.*

L. Dain. Then I have been so surfeited with the sight of a hideous entertainment to-day, at my Lady Cormorant's, who knows no other happineſs, or way of making one welcome, than eating or drinking: for though she saw I was just fainting at her vast limbs of butcher's meat, yet the civil savage forced me to sit down, and heaped enough upon my plate to victual a fleet for an East-India voyage.

L. Sad. How could you bear it? Ha, ha!—— Does your ladyship never go to the play?

L. Dain. Never, but when I bespeak it myself; and then not to mind the actors; for it's common to love sights. My great diversion is, in a reposed posture, to turn my eyes upon the galleries, and bleſs myself to hear the happy savages laugh; or when an awkward citizen crowds herself in among us, 'tis an unspeakable pleasure to contemplate her airs and dreſs: and they never 'scape me; for I am as apprehensive of such a creature's coming near me, as some people are when a cat is in the room. —But the play is begun, I believe; and if your ladyship has an inclination, I'll wait upon you.

L. Sad. I think, madam, we can't do better; and here comes Mr. Careleſs most opportunely to 'squire us.

Sir Sol. Careleſs! I don't know him; but my wife does, and that's as well.

Enter CARELESS.

Care. Ladies, your servant. Seeing your coach at the door, madam, made me not able to resist this opportunity to—to—you know, madam, there's no time to be lost in love. Sir Solomon, your servant.

Sir Sol. Oh, yours, yours, sir!——A very impudent fellow; and I'm in hopes will marry her. [*Aside.*

L. Dain. The assurance of this creature almost grows diverting: all one can do, can't make him the least sensible of a discouragement.

L. Sad. Try what compliance will do; perhaps that may fright him.

L. Dain. If it were not too dear a remedy—One would almost do any thing to get rid of his company.

Care. Which you never will, madam, till you marry me, depend upon it. Do that, and I'll trouble you no more.

Sir Sol. This fellow's abominable! He'll certainly have her. [*Aside.*

L. Dain. There's no depending upon your word, or else I might; for the last time I saw you, you told me then, you would trouble me no more.

Care. Ay, that's true, madam; but to keep one's word, you know, looks like a tradesman.

Sir Sol. Impudent rogue! But he'll have her.— [*Aside.*

Care. And is as much below a gentleman as paying one's debts.

Sir Sol. If he is not hanged first. [*Aside.*

Care. Besides, madam, I considered that my absence might endanger your constitution, which is so very tender, that nothing but love can save it; and so I would e'en advise you to throw away your juleps, your cordials, and slops, and take me all at once.

L. Dain. No, sir, bitter potions are not to be taken so suddenly.

Care. Oh, to choose, madam; for if you stand making of faces, and kicking against it, you'll but increase your aversion, and delay the cure. Come, come, you must be advised. [*Pressing her.*

L. Dain. What mean you, sir?

Care. To banish all your ails, and be myself your universal medicine.

Sir Sol. Well said! he'll have her. [*Aside.*

L. Dain. Impudent, robust man; I protest, did not I know his family, I should think his parents

had not lived in chairs and coaches, but had used their limbs all their lives! Hu! hu! but I begin to be persuaded health is a great blessing. [*Aside.*

Care. My limbs, madam, were conveyed to me before the use of chairs and coaches, and it might lessen the dignity of my ancestors, not to use them as they did.

L. Dain. Was ever such a rude understanding? to value himself upon the barbarism of his fore-fathers.——Indeed I have heard of kings that were bred to the plough, and, I fancy, you might descend from such a race; for you court as if you were behind one—Huh! huh! huh! To treat a woman of quality like an Exchange wench, and express your passion with your arms:—unpolished man!

Care. I was willing, madam, to take from the vulgar the only desirable thing among them, and shew you—how they live so healthy—for they have no other remedy.

L. Dain. A very rough medicine! huh! huh!

Care. To those that never took it, it may seem so—

L. Dain. Abandoned ravisher! Oh!

[*Struggling.*

Sir Sol. He has her; he has her. [*Aside.*

L. Dain. Leave the room, and see my face no more.

Care. [*Bows and is going.*]

L. Dain. And, hark ye, sir, no bribe, no mediations to my woman.

Care. [*Bows and sighs.*]

L. Dain. Thou profligate! to hug! to clasp! to embrace and throw your robust arms about me, like a vulgar, and indelicate—Oh, I faint with apprehension of so gross an address!

[*She faints, and Care. catches her.*

Care. Oh, my offended fair!

L. Dain. Inhuman! ravisher! Oh!

[*Care. carries her off.*

Sir Sol. He has her! she's undone! he has her!

[*Exeunt Sir Sol. and Lady Sad.*

Enter CLARINDA *and* SYLVIA.

Clar. Well, cousin, what do you think of your gentleman now?

Syl. I fancy, madam, that would be as proper a question to ask you: for really I don't see any great reason to alter my opinion of him yet.

Clar. Now I could dash her at once, and shew it her under his own hand that his name's Standfast, and he'll be here in a quarter of an hour. [*Aside.*] I vow I don't think I ought to refuse you any service in my power; therefore if you think it worth your while not to be out of countenance when the colonel comes, I would advise you to withdraw now; for if you dare take his own word for it, he will be here in three minutes, as this may convince you. [*Gives a Letter.*

Syl. What's here? a letter from Colonel Standfast.—Really, cousin, I have nothing to say to him. ——Mr. Freeman's the person I'm concerned for, and I expect to see him here in a quarter of an hour.

Clar. Then you don't believe them both the same person?

Syl. Not by their hands or style, I can assure you, as this may convince you. [*Gives a Letter.*

Clar. Ha! the hand is different indeed.——I scarce know what to think,—and yet I'm sure my eyes were not deceived.

Syl. Come, cousin, let's be a little cooler; 'tis not impossible but we may have both laughed at one another to no purpose—for I am confident they are two persons.

Clar. I can't tell that, but I'm sure here comes one of them.

Enter ATALL *as Colonel* STANDFAST.

Syl. Ha!

At. Hey! Bombard, (there they are faith!) bid the chariot set up, and call again about one or two in the morning.——You see, madam, what 'tis to give an impudent fellow the least encouragement: I'm resolved now to make a night on't with you.

Clar. I am afraid, colonel, we shall have much

ado to be good company, for we are two women to one man, you see; and if we should both have a particular fancy to have you, I doubt you'd make but bungling work on't.

At. I warrant you we will pass our time like gods: two ladies and one man; the prettiest set for Ombre in the universe.—Come, come! Cards, cards, cards! and tea, that I insist upon.

Clar. Well, sir, if my cousin will make one, I won't balk your good-humour.

[*Turning Syl. to face him.*

At. Is the lady your relation, madam?—I beg the honour to be known to her.

Clar. Oh, sir, that I'm sure she can't refuse you.——Cousin, this is Colonel Standfast. [*Laughs aside.*] I hope now she's convinced.

At. Your pardon, madam, if I am a little particular in my desire to be known to any of this lady's relations. [*Salutes.*

Syl. You'll certainly deserve mine, sir, by being always particular to that lady.——

At. Oh, madam!—Tall, lall.

[*Turns away and sings.*

Syl. This assurance is beyond example. [*Aside.*

Clar. How do you do, cousin?

Syl. Beyond bearing—but not incurable. [*Aside.*

Clar. [*Aside.*] Now can't I find in my heart to give him one angry word for his impudence to me this morning? the pleasure of seeing my rival mortified makes me strangely good-natured.

At. [*Turning familiarly to Clar.*] Upon my soul you are provokingly handsome to-day. Ay Gad! why is not it high treason for any beautiful woman to marry?

Clar. What, would you have us lead apes?

At. Not one of you, by all that's lovely!——Do you think we could not find you better employment?——Death! what a hand is here?——Gad, I shall grow foolish!

Clar. Stick to your assurance, and you are in no danger.

At. Why then, in obedience to your commands, prithee answer me sincerely one question: How long do you really design to make me dangle thus?

Clar. Why, really I can't just set you a time; but when you are weary of your service, come to me with a sixpence and modesty, and I'll give you a discharge.

At. Thou insolent, provoking, handsome tyrant!

Clar. Come, let me go——this is not a very civil way of entertaining my cousin, methinks.

At. I beg her pardon indeed. [*Bowing to Syl.*] But lovers, you know, madam, may plead a sort of excuse for being singular, when the favourite fair's in company.—But we were talking of cards, ladies.

Clar. Cousin, what say you?

Syl. I had rather you would excuse me; I am a little unfit for play at this time.

At. What a valuable virtue is aſsurance! Now am I as intrepid as a lawyer at the bar. [*Aside.*

Clar. Bleſs me! you are not well!

Syl. I shall be presently.——Pray, sir, give me leave to ask you a question.

At. So, now it's coming! [*Aside.*] Freely, madam.

Syl. Look on me well:—have you never seen my face before?

At. Upon my word, madam, I can't recollect that I have.

Syl. I am satisfied.

At. But pray, madam, why may you ask?

Syl. I am too much disordered now to tell you ——But if I'm not deceived, I'm miserable.

[*Weeps.*

At. This is strange.——How her concern transports me!

Clar. Her fears have touched me, and half perſuade me to revenge them.——Come, cousin, be easy: I see you are convinced he is the same, and now I'll prove myself a friend.

Syl. I know not what to think——my senses are confounded: their features are indeed the same; and yet there's something in their air, their dress, and manner, strangely different: but be it as it will, all right to him in presence I disclaim, and yield to you for ever.

"*At.* Oh, charming, joyful grief! [*Aside.*"

Clar. No, cousin, believe it, both our senses can-

not be deceived; he's individually the same; and since he dares be base to you, he's miserable indeed, if flattered with the distant hope of me. I know his person and his falsehood both too well; and you shall see I will, as becomes your friend, resent it.

At. What means this strangeness, madam?

Clar. I'll tell you, sir; and to use few words, know then, this lady and myself have borne your faithless insolence and artifice too long: but that you may not think to impose on me, at least, I desire you would leave the house, and from this moment never see me more.

At. Madam! What! what is all this?

Riddle me riddle me re,
For the devil take me
For ever from thee,
If I can divine what this riddle can be.

Syl. Not moved! I'm more amazed.

At. Pray, madam, in the name of common sense, let me know in two words what the real meaning of your last terrible speech was; and if I don't make you a plain, honest, reasonable answer to it, be pleased the next minute to blot my name out of your table-book, never more to be inrolled in the senseless catalogue of those vain coxcombs, that impudently hope to come into your favour.

Clar. This insolence grows tedious: what end can you propose by this assurance?

At. Hey-day!

Syl. Hold, cousin —one moment's patience: I'll send this minute again to Mr. Freeman, and if he does not immediately appear, the dispute will need no farther argument.

At. Mr. Freeman! Who the devil's he? What have I to do with him?

Syl. I'll soon inform you, sir.

[*Going meets Wishwell entering.*

Wish. Madam, here's a footman mightily out of breath, says he belongs to Mr. Freeman, and desires very earnestly to speak with you.

Syl. Mr. Freeman! Pray bid him come in.—— What can this mean?

At. You'll see presently. [*Aside.*

Re-enter WISHWELL *with* FINDER.

Clar. Ha!

Syl. Come hither, friend: do you belong to Mr. Freeman?

Fin. Yes, madam, and my poor master gives his humble service to your ladyship, and begs your pardon for not waiting on you according to his promise; which he would have done, but for an unfortunate accident.

Syl. What's the matter?

Fin. As he was coming out of his lodgings to pay his duty to you, madam, a parcel of fellows set upon him, and said they had a warrant against him; and so, because the rascals began to be saucy with him, and my master knowing that he did not owe a shilling in the world, he drew to defend himself, and in the scuffle the bloody villains run one of their swords quite through his arm; but the best of the jest was, madam, that as soon as they got him into a house, and sent for a surgeon, he proved to be the wrong person; for their warrant, it seems, was against a poor scoundrel, that happens, they say, to be very like him, one Colonel Standfast.

At. Say you so, Mr. Dog——if your master had been here I would have given him as much.

[*Gives him a Box on the Ear.*

Fin. Oh, Lord! pray, madam, save me—I did not speak a word to the gentleman—Oh, the devil! this must be the devil in the likeness of my master.

Syl. Is this gentleman so very like him, say you?

Fin. Like, madam! ay, as one box of the ear is like to another; only I think, madam, my master's nose is a little, little higher.

At. Now, ladies, I presume the riddle's solved ——Hark you, where is your master, rascal?

Fin. Master, rascal! Sir, my master's name's Freeman, and I'm a free-born Englishman; and I must tell you, sir, that I don't use to take such arbitrary socks of the face from any man that does not pay me wages; and so my master will tell you too when he comes, sir.

Syl. Will he be here then?

Fin. This minute, madam, he only stays to have his wound dreſsed.

At. I'm resolved I'll stay that minute out, if he does not come till midnight.

Fin. A pox of his mettle—when his hand's in he makes no difference between jest and earnest, I find —If he does not pay me well for this, 'egad he shall tell the next for himself. [*Aside.*] Has your ladyship any commands to my master, madam?

Syl. Yes; pray give him my humble service, say I'm sorry for his misfortune; and if he thinks 'twill do his wound no harm, I beg, by all means, he may be brought hither immediately.

Fin. 'Shah! his wound, madam, I know he does not value it of a rush; for he'll have the devil and all of actions against the rogues for false imprisonment, and smart-money——Ladies, I kiſs your hands ——Sir, I——nothing at all—— [*Exit.*

At. [*Aside.*] The dog has done it rarely; for a lie upon the stretch I don't know a better rascal in Europe.

Enter an OFFICER.

Off. Ay! now I'm sure I'm right——Is not your name Colonel Standfast, sir?

At. Yes, sir; what then?

Off. Then you are my prisoner, sir——

At. Your prisoner! who the devil are you? a bailiff: I don't owe a shilling.

Off. I don't care if you don't, sir; I have a warrant against you for high treason, and I must have you away this minute.

At. Look you, sir, depend upon't, this is but some impertinent malicious prosecution: you may venture to stay a quarter of an hour, I'm sure; I have some buſineſs here till then, that concerns me nearer than my life.

Clar. Have but so much patience, and I'll satisfy you for your civility.

Off. I could not stay a quarter of an hour, madam, if you'd give me five hundred pounds.

Syl. Can't you take bail, sir?

Off. Bail! no, no.

Clar. Whither must he be carried?

Off. To my house, till he's examined before the council.

Clar. Where is your house?

Off. Just by the secretary's office; every body knows Mr. Lockum the messenger—Come, sir.

At. I can't stir yet, indeed, sir.

[*Lays his Hand on his Sword.*

Off. Nay, look you, if you are for that play—Come in, gentlemen, away with him.

Enter MUSQUETEERS *and force him off.*

Syl. This is the strangest accident: I am extremely sorry for the colonel's misfortune, but I am heartily glad he is not Mr. Freeman.

Clar. I'm afraid you'll find him so——I shall never change my opinion of him till I see them face to face.

Syl. Well, cousin, let them be two or one, I'm resolved to stick to Mr. Freeman; for, to tell you the truth, this last spark has too much of the confident rake in him to please me; but there is a modest sincerity in t'other's conversation that's irresistible.

Clar. For my part I'm almost tired with his impertinence either way, and could find in my heart to trouble myself no more about him; and yet methinks it provokes me to have a fellow outface my senses.

Syl. Nay, they are strangely alike I own; but yet, if you observe nicely, Mr. Freeman's features are more pale and pensive than the colonel's.

Clar. When Mr. Freeman comes, I'll be closer in my observation of him—in the mean time let me consider what I really propose by all this rout I make about him: suppose (which I can never believe) they should prove two several men at last, I don't find that I'm fool enough to think of marrying either of them; nor (whatever airs I give myself) am I yet mad enough to do worse with them—— Well, since I don't design to come to a close engagement myself, then why should I not generously stand out of the way, and make room for one that would? No, I can't do that neither—I want, methinks, to convict him first of being one and the same person,

and then to have him convince my cousin that he likes me better than her—Ay, that would do! and to confeſs my infirmity, I still find (though I don't care for this fellow) while she has aſsurance to nourish the least hope of getting him from me, I shall never be heartily easy till she's heartily mortified.

[*Aside.*

Syl. You seem very much concerned for the Colonel's misfortune, cousin.

Clar. His misfortunes seldom hold him long, as you may see; for here he comes.

Enter ATALL, *as Mr.* FREEMAN.

Syl. Bleſs me!

At. I am sorry, madam, I could not be more punctual to your obliging commands; but the accident that prevented my coming sooner, will, I hope, now give me a pretence to a better welcome than my last; for now, madam, [*To Clar.*] your mistake's set right, I presume, and, I hope, you won't expect Mr. Freeman to answer for all the miscarriages of Colonel Standfast.

Clar. Not in the least, sir: the colonel's able to answer for himself, I find! ha, ha!

At. Was not my servant with you, madam?

[*To Syl.*

Syl. Yes, yes, sir, he has told us all. [*Aside.*] And I am sorry you have paid so dear for a proof of your innocence. Come, come, I'd advise you to set your heart at rest; for what I design, you'll find, I shall come to a speedy resolution in.

At. Oh, generous resolution!

Clar. Well, madam, since you are so tenacious of your conquest, I hope you'll give me the same liberty: and not expect the next time you fall a crying at the colonel's gallantry to me, that my good-nature should give you up my pretensions to him. And for you, sir, I shall only tell you, this last plot was not so clearly laid, but that a woman of a very slender capacity, you'll find, has wit enough to discover it. [*Exit Clar.*

At. So! she's gone to the meſsenger's I suppose—but, poor soul, her intelligence there will be er

[illegible] [*Aside.*] Well, madam, I hope at last your scruples are over?

Syl. You can't blame me, sir, if now we are alone, I own myself a little more surprised at her positiveness, than my woman's pride would let me confess before her face; and yet methinks there's a native honesty in your look, that tells me I am not mistaken, and may trust you with my heart.

Atl. Oh, for pity still preserve that tender thought, and save me from despair.

Enter CLERIMONT.

Cler. Ha! Freeman again! Is it possible?

Atl. How now, Clerimont, what are you surprised at?

Cler. Why to see thee almost in two places at one time; 'tis but this minute, I met the very image of thee with a mob about the coach, in the hands of a messenger, whom I had the curiosity to stop and call to, and had no other proof of his not being thee, but that the spark would not know me!

Syl. Strange! I almost think I'm really not deceived.

Cler. 'Twas certainly Clarinda I saw go out in a chair just now—it must be she—the circumstances are too strong for a mistake. [*Aside.*

Syl. Well, sir, to ease you of your fears, now I dare own to you, that mine are over. [*To Atall.*

Cler. What a coxcomb have I made myself, to serve my rival even with my own mistress? But 'tis at least some ease to know him: all I have to hope is, that he does not know the ass he has made of me—that might indeed be fatal to him. [*Aside.*

Enter SYLVIA's *Maid.*

Maid. Oh, madam, I'm glad I've found you: your father and I have been hunting you all the [illegible] over.

Syl. My father in town!

Maid. He waits below in the coach for you: he must needs have you come away this minute; and talks of having you married this very night to the fine gentleman he spoke to you of.

Syl. What do I hear?

At. If ever soft compaſsion touched your soul, give me a word of comfort in this last diſtreſs, to save me from the horrors that surround me.

Syl. You see we are obſerved——but yet depend upon my faith as on my life.——In the mean time, I'll use my utmost power to avoid my father's haſty will: in two hours you shall know my fortune and my family—Now, don't follow me, as you'd preserve my friendship. Come—— [*Exit with Maid.*

At. Death! how this news alarms me! I never felt the pains of love before.

Cler. Now then to ease, or to revenge my fears—The sudden change of your countenance, Mr. Atall, looks as if you had a mind to banter your friend into a belief of your being really in love with the lady that just now left you.

At. Faith, Clerimont, I have too much concern upon me at this time, to be capable of a banter.

Cler. Ha! he seems really touched, and I begin now only to fear Clarinda's conduct.——Well, sir, if it be so, I'm glad to see a convert of you: and now, in return to the little services I have done you, in helping you to carry on your affair with both these ladies at one time, give me leave to ask a favour of you——Be still sincere, and we may still be friends.

At. You surprise me—but use me as you find me.

Cler. Have you no acquaintance with a certain lady whom you have lately heard me own I was unfortunately in love with?

At. Not that I know of, I'm sure not as the lady you are in love with: but, pray, why do you ask?

Cler. Come, I'll be sincere with you too: because I have strong circumstances that convince me 'tis one of those two you have been so busy about.

At. Not she you saw with me, I hope?

Cler. No; I mean the other—But to clear the doubt at once, is her name Clarinda?

At. I own it is: but had I the least been warned of your pretences——

Cler. Sir, I dare believe you: and though you may have prevailed even against her honour, yo-

ignorance of my paſsion for her makes you stand at least excused to me.

At. No; by all the solemn protestations tongue can utter, her honour is untainted yet for me; nay, even unattempted: "nor had I ever an opportuni-"ty, that could encourage the most distant thought "against it."

Cler. You own she has received your gallantries at least.

At. Faith, not to be vain, she has indeed taken some pains to pique her cousin about me; and if her beautiful cousin had not fallen in my way at the same time, I must own, 'tis very poſsible I might have endeavoured to push my fortune with her; but since I now know your heart, put my friendship to a trial.

Cler. Only this—If I should be reduced to ask it of you, promise to confeſs your impoſture, and your paſsion to her cousin, before her face.

At. There's my hand,—I'll do't, to right my friend and mistreſs. But, dear Clerimont, you'll pardon me if I leave you here; for my poor incognita's affairs at this time are in a very critical condition.

Cler. No ceremony—I release you.

At. Adieu. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.

Enter CLERIMONT *and* CARELESS.

Cler. And so you took the opportunity of her fainting to carry her off! Pray, how long did her fit last?

Care. Why, faith, I so humoured her affectation, that 'tis hardly over yet; for I told her, her life was in danger, and swore, if she would not let me send

for a parson to marry her before she died, I'd that minute send for a shroud, and be buried alive with her in the same coffin: but at the apprehension of so terrible a thought, she pretended to be frightened into her right senses again; and forbid me her sight for ever.——So that, in short, my impudence is almost exhausted, her affectation is as unsurmountable as another's real virtue, and I must e'en catch her that way, or die without her at last.

Cler. How do you mean?

Care. Why, if I find I can't impose upon her by humility, which I'll try, I'll even turn rival to myself in a very fantastical figure, that I'm sure she won't be able to resist. You must know, she has of late been flattered that the Muscovite Prince Alexander is dying for her, though he never spoke to her in his life.

Cler. I understand you: so you'd first venture to pique her against you, and then let her marry you in another person to be revenged of you.

Care. One of the two ways I am pretty sure to succeed.

Cler. Extravagant enough! Prithee, is Sir Solomon in the next room?

Care. What, you want his assistance? Clarinda's in her airs again!

Cler. Faith, Careless, I'm almost ashamed to tell you, but I must needs speak with him.

Care. Come along then.

Enter Lady DAINTY, *Lady* SADLIFE, *and* CARELESS.

L. Dain. This rude, boisterous man, has given me a thousand disorders; the colic, the spleen, the palpitation of the heart, and convulsions all over—Huh! huh!—I must send for the doctor.

L. Sad. Come, come, madam, e'en pardon him, and let him be your physician—do but observe his penitence, so humble he dares not speak to you.

Care. [*Folds his Arms and sighs.*] Oh!

L. Sad. How can you hear him sigh so?

L. Dain. Nay, let him groan—for nothing but his pangs can ease me.

Care. [*Kneels and presents her his drawing wo*

opening his Breast.] Be then at once most barbarously just, and take your vengeance here.

L. Dain. No, I give thee life to make thee miserable; live, that my resenting eyes may kill thee every hour.

Care. Nay, then there's no relief——but this——

[*Offering at his Sword, Lady Sadlife holds him.*

L. Sad. Ah! for mercy's sake——Barbarous creature, how can you see him thus?

L. Dain. Why, I did not bid him kill himself: but do you really think he would have done it?

L. Sad. Certainly, if I had not prevented it.

L. Dain. Strange paſsion! But 'tis its nature to be violent, when one makes it deſpair.

L. Sad. Won't you ſpeak to him?

L. Dain. No, but if your——is enough concerned to be his friend, you may tell him—not that it really is ſo—but you may ſay—you believe I pity him.

L. Sad. Sure love was never more ridiculous on both ſides.

Enter WISHWELL.

Wish. Madam, here's a page from Prince Alexander deſires to give a letter into your ladyſhip's own hands.

L. Dain. Prince Alexander! what means my heart? I come to him.

L. Sad. By no means, madam, pray let him come in.

Care. Ha! Prince Alexander! nay, then I have found out the ſecret of this coldneſs, madam.

Enter PAGE.

Page. Madam, his Royal Highneſs Prince Alexander, my maſter, has commanded me, on pain of death, thus [*Kneeling.*] to deliver this, the burning ſecret of his heart.

L. Dain. Where is the Prince?

Page. Reposed in private on a mourning pallat, till your commands vouchſafe to raiſe him.

L. Sad. By all means, receive him here immedi-

ately. I have the honour to be a little known to his highneſs.

L. Dain. The favour, madam, is too great to be resisted: pray tell his highneſs then, the honour of the visit he designs me, makes me thankful and impatient! huh! huh! [*Exit Page.*

Care. Are my sufferings, madam, so soon forgot then! Was I but flattered with the hope of pity?

L. Dain. The happy have whole days, and those they choose. [*Resenting.*] The unhappy have but hours, and those they lose. [*Exit repeating.*

L. Sad. Don't you lose a minute then.

Care. I'll warrant you—ten thousand thanks, dear madam, I'll be transformed in a second——— [*Exeunt severally.*

Enter CLARINDA *in a Man's Habit.*

Clar. So! I'm in for't now! how I shall come off I can't tell: 'twas but a bare saving game I made with Clerimont; his resentment had brought my pride to its last legs, diſsembling; and if the poor man had not loved me too well, I had made but a dismal humble figure—I have used him ill, that's certain, and he may e'en thank himself for't—he would be sincere—Well, (begging my sex's pardon) we do make the silliest tyrants——we had better be reasonable; for (to do them right) we don't run half the hazard in obeying the good sense of a lover; at least, I'm reduced now to make the experiment—— Here they come.

Enter Sir SOLOMON *and* CLERIMONT.

Sir Sol. What have we here! another captain? If I were sure he were a coward now, I'd kick him before he speaks——Is your buſineſs with me, sir?

Clar. If your name be Sir Solomon Sadlife.

Sir Sol. Yes, sir, it is; and I'll maintain it as ancient as any, and related to most of the families in England.

Clar. My buſineſs will convince you, sir, that I think well of it.

Sir Sol. And what is your buſineſs, sir?

Clar. Why, sir——You have a pretty kinswoman, called Clarinda.

Cler. Ha!

Sir Sol. And what then, sir?——Such a rogue as t'other. [*Aside.*

Clar. Now, sir, I have seen her, and am in love with her.

Cler. Say you so, sir?—I may chance to cure you of it. [*Aside.*

Clar. And to back my pretensions, sir, I have a good fifteen hundred pounds a year estate, and am, as you see, a pretty fellow into the bargain.

Sir Sol. She that marries you, sir, will have a choice bargain indeed.

Clar. In short, sir, I'll give you a thousand guineas to make up the match.

Sir Sol. Hum—[*Aside.*]—But, sir, my niece is provided for.

Cler. That's well! [*Aside.*

Sir Sol. But if she were not, sir, I must tell you, she is not to be caught with a smock-face and a feather, sir——And——and——let me see you an hour hence. [*Aside.*

Clar. Well said, uncle! [*Aside.*]——But, sir, I'm in love with her, and positively will have her.

Sir Sol. Whether she likes you or no, sir?

Clar. Like me! ha, ha! I'd fain see a woman that dislikes a pretty fellow, with fifteen hundred pounds a year, a white wig, and black eye-brows.

Cler. Hark, you, young gentleman, there must go more than all this to the gaining of that lady.

[*Takes Clarinda aside.*

Sir Sol. [*Aside.*] A thousand guineas—that's five hundred more than I proposed to get of Mr. Clerimont——But my honour is engaged——Ay, but then here's a thousand pounds to release it—Now, shall I take the money?—It must be so—Coin will carry it.

Clar. Oh, sir, if that be all, I'll soon remove your doubts and pretensions! Come, sir, I'll try your courage.

Cler. I'm afraid you won't, young gentleman.

Clar. As young as I am, sir, you shall find I scorn to turn my back to any man.

[*Exeunt Clarinda and Clerimont.*

Sir Sol. Ha! they are gone to fight——with all

my heart—a fair chance, at least, for a better bargain: for if the young spark should let the air into my friend Clerimont's midriff now, it may possibly cool his love too, and then there's my honour safe, and a thousand guineas snug. [*Exit.*

" *Enter Lady* DAINTY, *Lady* SADLIFE, *and* " CARELESS *as Prince* ALEXANDER.

" *L. Dain.* Your highneſs, sir, has done me ho-
" nour in this visit.

" *Care.* Madam——— [*Salutes her.*

" *L. Dain.* A captivating person!

" *Care.* May the days be taken from my life, and
" added to yours, most incomparable beauty, whiter
" than the snow that lies throughout the year un-
" melted on our Ruſsian mountains!

" *L. Dain.* How manly his expreſsions are!—We
" are extremely obliged to the Czar, for not taking
" your highneſs home with him.

" *Care.* He left me, madam, to learn to be a ship
" carpenter.

" *L. Sad.* A very polite accomplishment!

" *L. Dain.* And in a prince entirely new.

" *Care.* All his nobles, madam, are masters of
" some useful science; and most of our arms are
" quartered with mechanical instruments, as
" hatchets, hammers, pick-axes, and hand-saws.

" *L. Dain.* I admire the manly manners of your
" court.

" *L. Sad.* Oh! so infinitely beyond the soft idleneſs
" of ours!

" *Care.* 'Tis the fashion, ladies, for the eastern
" princes to profeſs some trade or other. The last
" Grand Signior was a locksmith.

" *L. Dain.* How new his conversation is!

" *Care.* Too rude, I fear, madam, for so tender a
" composition as your divine ladyship's.

" *L. Dain.* Courtly to a softneſs too!

" *Care.* Were it poſsible, madam, that so much
" delicacy could endure the martial roughneſs of
" our manners and our country, I cannot boast; but
" if a province at your feet could make you mine,
" that province and its master should be yours.

" *L. Dain.* Ay, here's grandeur with a

" ——An odious native lover, now, would have " complained of the taxes, perhaps, and have hag- " gled with one for a scanty jointure out of his hor- " rid lead mines, in some uninhabitable mountains, " about an hundred and four-score miles from un- " heard-of London.

" *Care.* I am informed, madam, there is a certain " poor, distracted English fellow, that refused to " quit his saucy pretensions to your all-conquering " beauty, though he had heard I had myself resolved " to adore you. Careleſs, I think they call him.

" *L. Dain.* Your highneſs wrongs your merit, to " give yourself the least concern for one so much " below your fear.

" *Care.* When I first heard of him, I on the in- " stant ordered one of my retinue to strike off his " head with a scimitar; but they told me the free " laws of England allowed of no such power: so " that, though I am a prince of the blood, madam, " I am obliged only to murder him privately.

" *L. Dain.* 'Tis indeed a reproach to the ill- " breeding of our constitution, not to admit your " power with your person. But if the pain of my " entire neglect can end him, pray, be easy.

" *Care.* Madam, I'm not revengeful; make him " but miserable, I'm satisfied.

" *L. Dain.* You may depend upon it.

" *Care.* I'm in strange favour with her. [*Aside.*— " Please you, ladies, to make your fragrant fingers " familiar with this box.

" *L. Dain.* Sweet or plain, sir?

" *Care.* Right Mosco, madam, made of the sculls " of conquered enemies.

" *L. Sad.* Gunpowder, as I live! [*Exeunt.*"

SCENE II. Changes to a Field.

Enter CLARINDA *and* CLERIMONT.

Cler. Come, sir, we are far enough.

Clar. I only wish the lady were by, sir, that the conqueror might carry her off the spot—— I warrant she'd be mine.

Cler. That, my talking hero, we shall soon deter-

Clar. Not that I think her handsome, or care a rush for her.

Cler. You are very mettled, sir, to fight for a woman you don't value.

Clar. Sir, I value the reputation of a gentleman; and I don't think any young fellow ought to pretend to it, till he has talked himself into a lampoon, lost his two or three thousand pounds at play, kept his miſs, and killed his man.

Cler. Very gallant, indeed, sir! but if you please to handle your sword, you'll soon go through your course.

Clar. Come on, sir——I believe I shall give your mistreſs a truer account of your heart than you have done. I have had her heart long enough, and now will have yours.

Cler. Ha! does she love you, then?

[*Endeavouring to draw.*

Clar. I leave you to judge that, sir. But I have lain with her a thousand times; in short, so long, till I'm tired of it.

Cler. Villain, thou liest! Draw, or I'll use you as you deserve, and stab you.

Clar. Take this with you first, Clarinda will never marry him that murders me.

Cler. She may the man that vindicates her honour ——therefore be quick, or I'll keep my word——I find your sword is not for doing things in haste.

Clar. It sticks to the scabbard so; I believe I did not wipe off the blood of the last man I fought with.

Cler. Come, sir, this trifling sha'n't serve your turn—Here, give me yours, and take mine.

Clar. With all my heart, sir.——Now have at you.

[*Cler. draws, and finds only a Hilt in his Hand.*

Cler. Death! you villain, do you serve me so!

Clar. In love and war, sir, all advantages are fair; so we conquer, no matter whether by force or stratagem.——Come, quick, sir—your life or mistreſs.

Cler. Neither. Death! you shall have both or none! Here drive your sword; for only through this heart you reach Clarinda.

Clar. Death, sir, can you be mad enough to die for a woman that hates you?

Clar. If that were true, 'twere greater madneſs, then, to live.

Clar. Why, to my knowledge, sir, she has used you basely, falsely, ill, and for no reason.

Cler. No matter; no usage can be worse than the contempt of poorly, tamely parting with her. She may abuse her heart by happy infidelities; but 'tis the pride of mine to be even miserably constant.

Clar. Generous paſsion! you almost tempt me to resign her to you.

Cler. You cannot if you would. I would indeed have won her fairly from you with my sword; but scorn to take her as your gift. Be quick and end your insolence.

Clar. Yes, thus——Most generous Clerimont, you now, indeed, have fairly vanquished me! [*Runs to him.*] My woman's follies and my shame be buried ever here.

Cler. Ha, Clarinda! Is it poſsible? My wonder rises with my joy!—How came you in this habit?

Clar. Now you indeed recall my blushes; but I had no other veil to hide them, while I confeſs'd the injuries I had done your heart, in fooling with a man I never meant on any terms to engage with. Beside, I knew, from our late parting, your fear of losing me would reduce you to comply with Sir Solomon's demands, for his interest in your favour. Therefore, as you saw, I was resolved to ruin his market, by seeming to raise it; for he secretly took the offer I made him,

Cler. 'Twas generously and timely offered; for it really prevented my signing articles to him. But if you would heartily convince me that I shall never more have need of his interest, e'en let us steal to the next priest, and honestly put it out of his power ever to part us.

Cler. Why, truly, considering the trusts I have made you, 'twould be ridiculous now, I think, to deny you any thing: and if you should grow weary of me after such usage, I can't blame you.

Cler. *Banish that fear; my flame can never waste,*
For love sincere refines upon the taste. [Exeunt.

Enter Sir SOLOMON, *with Old Mr.* WILFUL; *Lady* SADLIFE, *and* SYLVIA *weeping.*

Sir Sol. Troth, my old friend, this is a bad buſineſs indeed; you have bound yourself in a thousand pounds bond, you say, to marry your daughter to a fine gentleman, and she in the mean time, it seems, is fallen in love with a stranger.

Wilf. Look you, Sir Solomon, it does not trouble me o' this; for I'll make her do as I please, or I'll starve her.

L. Sad. But, sir, your daughter tells me that the gentleman she loves is in every degree in as good circumstances as the person you design her for; and if he does not prove himself so before to-morrow morning, she will cheerfully submit to whatever you'll impose on her.

Wilf. All sham! all sham! only to gain time. I expect my friend and his son here immediately, to demand performance of articles: and if her ladyship's nice stomach does not immediately comply with them, as I told you before, I'll starve her.

L. Sad. But, consider, sir, what a perpetual discord must a forced marriage probably produce.

Wilf. Discord! pshaw, waw! One man makes as good a husband as another. A month's marriage will set all to rights, I warrant you. You know the old saying, Sir Solomon, lying together makes pigs love.

L. Sad. [*To Syl.*] What shall we do for you? There's no altering him. Did not your lover promise to come to your aſsistance?

Syl. I expect him every minute; but can't foresee from him the least hope of my redemption.——This is he.

Enter ATALL *undisguised.*

At. My Sylvia, dry those tender eyes; for while there's life there's hope.

L. Sad. Ha! is't he? but I must smother my confusion. [*Aside.*

Wilf. How now, sir! pray, who gave you commiſsion to be so familiar with my daughter.?

At. Your pardon, sir; but when you kno

right you'll neither think my freedom or my pretensions familiar or dishonourable.

Wilf. Why, sir, what pretensions have you to her?

At. Sir, I saved her life at the hazard of my own: that gave me a pretence to know her; knowing her made me love, and gratitude made her receive it.

Wilf. Ay, sir! And some very good reasons, best known to myself, make me refuse it. Now, what will you do?

At. I can't tell yet, sir; but if you'll do me the favour to let me know those reasons——

Wilf. Sir, I don't think myself obliged to do either;—but I'll tell you what I'll do for you: since you say you love my daughter, and she loves you, I'll put you in the nearest way to get her.

At. Don't flatter me, I beg you, sir.

Wilf. Not I, upon my soul, sir; for look you, 'tis only this——get my consent, and you shall have her.

At. I beg your pardon, sir, for endeavouring to talk reason to you. But, to return your raillery, give me leave to tell you, when any man marries her but myself, he must extremely ask my consent.

Wilf. Before George, thou art a very pretty impudent fellow; and I'm sorry I can't punish her disobedience, by throwing her away upon thee.

At. You'll have a great deal of plague about this business, sir; for I shall be mighty difficult to give up my pretensions to her.

Wilf. Ha! 'tis a thousand pities I can't comply with thee. Thou wilt certainly be a thriving fellow; for thou dost really set the best face upon a bad cause, that ever I saw since I was born.

At. Come, sir, once more, raillery apart; suppose I prove myself of equal birth and fortune to deserve her.

Wilf. Sir, if you were eldest son to the Cham of Tartary, and had the dominions of the Great Mogul entailed upon you and your heirs for ever, it would signify no more than the bite of my thumb. The girl's disposed of; I have matched her already, upon a thousand pounds forfeit; and faith she shall fairly run for't, though she's yerk'd and flead from the crest to the crupper.

At. Confusion!

Syl. What will become of me?

Wilf. And if you don't think me in earnest now, here comes one that will convince you of my sincerity.

At. My father! Nay, then my ruin is inevitable.

Enter Sir HARRY ATALL.

Sir Har. [*To At.*] Oh, sweet sir! have I found you at last? Your very humble servant. What's the reason pray, that you have had the aſsurance to be almost a fortnight in town, and never come near me, especially when I sent you word I had buſineſs of such consequence with you.

At. I understood your buſineſs was to marry me, sir, to a woman I never saw: and to confeſs the truth, I durst not come near you, because I was at the same time in love with one you never saw.

Sir Har. Was you so, sir? Why, then, sir, I'll find a speedy cure for your paſsion——Brother Wilful—Hey, fiddles there!

At. Sir, you may treat me with what severity you please; but my engagements to that lady are too powerful and fixed to let the utmost misery diſsolve them.

Sir Har. What does the fool mean?

At. That I can sooner die than part with her.

Wilf. Hey!——Why, is this your son, Sir Harry?

Sir Har. Hey-day!—Why, did not you know that before?

At. Oh, earth, and all you stars! is this the lady you designed me, sir?

Syl. Oh, fortune! is it poſsible?

Sir. Har. And is this the lady, sir, you have been making such a bustle about?

At. Not life, health, or happineſs are half so dear to me.

Sir Sol. [*Joining At. and Sylvia's Hands.*] Loll, loll, leroll!

At. Oh, transporting joy! [*Embracing Sylvia.*

Sir Har. and Wilf. Loll! loll! [*Joining in the Tune, and dancing about them.*]

Sir Sol. Hey! within there! [*Calls the Fid*

By jingo, we'll make a night on't!

Enter CLARINDA *and* CLERIMONT.

Clar. Save you, save you, good people—I'm glad, uncle, to hear you call so cheerfully for the fiddles; it looks as if you had a husband ready for me.

Sir Sol. Why, that I may have by to-morrow night, madam; but, in the mean time, if you please, you may wish your friends joy.

Clar. Dear Sylvia!

Syl. Clarinda!

At. Oh, Clerimont, such a deliverance!

Cler. Give you joy, joy, sir.

Clar. I congratulate your happineſs, and am pleased our little jealousies are over; Mr. Clerimont has told me all, and cured me of curiosity for ever.

Syl. What, married?

Clar. You'll see presently. But, Sir Solomon, what do you mean by to-morrow? Why, do you fancy I have any more patience than the rest of my neighbours?

Sir Sol. Why, truly, madam, I don't suppose you have; but I believe to-morrow will be as soon as their buſineſs can be done; by which time I expect a jolly fox-hunter from Yorkshire: and if you are resolved not to have patience till next day, why, the same parson may toſs you up all four in a dish together.

Clar. A filthy fox-hunter!

Sir Sol. Odzooks, a mettled fellow, that will ride you from day-break to sun-set! None of your flimsy London rascals, that must have a chair to carry them to their coach, and a coach to carry them to a trapes, and a constable to carry both to the round-house.

Clar. Ay, but this fox-hunter, Sir Solomon, will come home dirty and tired as one of his hounds; he'll be always asleep before he's a-bed, and on horseback before he's awake; he must rise early to follow his sport, and I sit up late at cards for want of better diversion. Put this together, my wise uncle.

Sir Sol. Are you so high fed, madam, that a country gentleman of fifteen hundred pounds a-year can't go down with you?

Clar. Not so, sir; but you really kept me so sharp

that I was e'en forced to provide for myself; and here stands the fox-hunter for my money.

[*Claps Cler. on the shoulder.*

Sir Sol. How!

Cler. Even so, Sir Solomon—Hark in your ear, sir—You really held your consent at so high a price, that, to give you a proof of my good husbandry, I was resolved to save charges, and e'en marry her without it.

Sir Sol. Hell and———

Cler. And hark you in t'other ear, sir——Because I would not have you expose your reverend age by a mistake, know, sir, I was the young spark with a smooth face and a feather, that offered you a thousand guineas for your consent, which you would have been glad to have taken.

Sir Sol. The devil!——If ever I traffic in women's flesh again, may all the bank stocks fall when I have bought them, and rise when I have sold them.——Hey-day! what have we here? more cheats?

Clar. Not unlikely, sir; for I fancy they are married.

Enter Lady DAINTY *and* CARELESS.

L. Sad. That they are, I can assure you——I give your highness joy, madam.

L. Dain. Lard, that people of any rank should use such vulgar salutations! though, methinks, highness has something of grandeur in the sound. But I was in hopes, good people, that confident fellow, Careless, had been among you.

Care. What say you, madam, (to divert the good company) shall we send for him by way of mortification?

L. Dain. By all means; for your sake, methinks, I ought to give him full despair.

Care. Why, then, to let you see, that 'tis a much easier thing to cure a fine lady of her sickly taste, than a lover of his impudence—there's Careless, for you, without the least tincture of despair about him.

[*Discovers himself.*

All. Ha, Careless!

L. Dain. Abused! undone!

All. Ha, ha!

Cler. Nay now, madam, we wish you a superior joy; for you have married a man instead of a monster.

Care. Come, come, madam; since you find you were in the power of such a cheat, you may be glad it was no greater; you might have fallen into a rascal's hands; but you know I am a gentleman, my fortune no small one, and, if your temper will give me leave, will deserve you.

L. Sad. Come, e'en make the best of your fortune; for, take my word, if the cheat had not been a very agreeable one, I would never have had a hand in't.—You must pardon me, if I can't help laughing.

L. Dain. Well, since it must be so, I pardon all; only one thing let me beg of you, sir, that is, your promise to wear this habit one month for my satisfaction.

Care. Oh, madam, that's a trifle! I'll lie in the sun a whole summer for an olive complexion, to oblige you.

L. Dain. Well, Mr. Careleſs, I begin now to think better of my fortune, and look back with apprehension of the escape I have had; you have already cured my folly, and were but my health recoverable, I should think myself completely happy.

Care. For that, madam, we'll venture to save you doctor's fees;

And trust to nature: time will soon discover,
Your best physician is a favour'd lover.

[Exeunt.

EPILOGUE.

WELL, sirs, I know not how the play may paſs,
But, in my humble sense—our bard's an aſs;
For had he ever known the least of nature,
H' had found his double spark a dismal creature:
To please two ladies he two forms put on,
As if the thing in shadows could be done;
The women really two, and he, poor soul! but one.
Had he revers'd the hint, h' had done the feat,
Had made th' impostor credibly complete;
A single mistreſs might have stood the cheat.
She might to several lovers have been kind,
Nor strain'd your faith, to think both pleas'd and blind.
Plain sense had known, the fair can love receive,
With half the pains your warmest vows can give.

But, hold! I'm thinking I mistake the matter——
On second thoughts—The hint's but honest satire,
And only meant t' expose their modish sense,
Who think the fire of love's but impudence.
Our spark was really modest; when he found
Two female claims at once, he one disown'd;
Wisely presuming, though in ne'er such haste,
One would be found enough for him at last.
So that, to sum the whole, I think the play
Deserves the usual favours on his day;
If not, he swears he'll write the next to music,
In doggrel rhimes would make or him or you sic

His groveling sense Italian airs shall crown,
And then he's sure ev'n nonsense will go down.
But if you'd have the world suppose the stage,
Not quite forsaken in this airy age,
Let your glad votes our needleſs fears confound,
And speak in claps as loud for sense as sound.

LOVE IN A VILLAGE.

A

COMIC OPERA.

BY

ISAAC BICKERSTAFF.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY C. WHITTINGHAM,
Dean Street,
FOR JOHN SHARPE, OPPOSITE YORK HOUSE,
PICCADILLY.

1805.

TO

MR. BEARD.

SIR,

IT is with great pleasure I embrace this opportunity to acknowledge the favours I have received from you. Among others, I would mention in particular, the warmth with which you espoused this piece in its paſsage to the stage; but I am afraid it would be thought a compliment to your good-nature, too much at the expence of your judgment.

If what I now venture to lay before the public, is considered merely as a piece of dramatic writing, it will certainly be found to have very little merit: in that light no one can think more indifferently of it than I do myself; but I believe I may venture to aſsert, on your opinion, that some of the songs are tolerable; that the music is more pleasing than has hitherto appeared in compositions of this kind; and the words better adapted, considering the nature of the airs, which are not common ballads, than could be expected, supposing any degree of poetry to be preserved in the versification.

More than this, few people expect in an Opera: and if some of the severer critics should be inclined to blame your indulgence to one of the first attempts of a young writer, I am persuaded the public in general will applaud your endeavour to provide them with something new, in a species of entertainment in which the performers at y^r^ theatre so eminently excel.

You may perceive, sir, that I yield a punctual observance to the injunctions you laid upon me, when I threatened you with this addreſs, and make it rather a preface than a dedication: and yet I muſt confeſs I can hardly reconcile thoſe formalities which render it indelicate to pay praiſes where all the world allows them to be due; nor can I easily conceive why a man ſhould be ſo ſtudious to deſerve what he does not deſire: but ſince you will not allow me to offer any panegyric to you, I muſt haſten to beſtow one upon myſelf, and let the public know (which was my chief deſign in this introduction) that I have the happineſs to be.

SIR,

Your most obliged,

and most obedient ſervant.

THE AUTHOR.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Sir William Meadows.
Young Meadows, *his Son.*
Juſtice Woodcock, *Father to* Lucinda.
Hawthorne, *a Country Squire.*
Euſtace, *attached to* Lucinda.
Hodge, *a Country Bumpkin.*

Roſetta, *attached to Young* Meadows.
Lucinda, *attached to* Euſtace.
Deborah Woodcock, *Siſter to Juſtice* Woodcock.
Margery, *ſeduced by* Hodge.

SCENE, a Village in England.

LOVE IN A VILLAGE.

ACT I.

SCENE I. A Garden with Statues, Fountains, and Flower-pots. Several Arbours appear in the side Scenes.

ROSSETTA *and* LUCINDA *are discovered at Work, seated upon Two Garden Chairs.*

AIR.

Ros. HOPE! thou nurse of young desire,
Fairy promiser of joy,
Painted vapour, glow-worm fire,
Temp'rate sweet, that ne'er can cloy:

Luc. Hope! thou earnest of delight,
Softest soother of the mind,
Balmy cordial, prospect bright,
Surest friend the wretched find:

Both. Kind deceiver, flatter still,
Deal out pleasures unpossest,
With thy dreams my fancy fill,
And in wishes make me blest.

Luc. Heigho!—Rosetta?

Ros. Well, child, what do you say?

Luc. 'Tis a devilish thing to live in a village a hundred miles from the capital, with a preposterous gouty father, and a super-annuated maiden aunt.—I am heartily sick of my situation.

Ros. And with reason—But 'tis in a great measure your own fault: here is this Mr. Eustace, a man of character and family; he likes

like him; you know one another's minds, and yet you will not resolve to make yourself happy with him.

AIR.

Whence can you inherit
So slavish a spirit?
Confin'd thus, and chain'd to a log!
Now fondled, now chid,
Permitted, forbid:
'Tis leading the life of a dog.

For shame, you a lover!
More firmneſs discover;
Take courage, nor here longer mope;
Resist and be free,
Run riot like me,
And, to perfect the picture, elope.

Luc. And is this your advice?

Ros. Positively.

Luc. Here's my hand; positively I'll follow it—I have already sent to my gentleman, who is now in the country, to let him know he may come hither this day; we will make use of the opportunity to settle all preliminaries—And then—But take notice, whenever we decamp, you march off along with us.

Ros. Oh! madam, your servant; I have no inclination to be left behind, I aſsure you—But you say you got acquainted with this spark, while you were with your mother during her last illneſs at Bath, so that your father has never seen him?

Luc. Never in his life, my dear; and, I am confident, he entertains not the least suspicion of my having any such connection: my aunt, indeed, has her doubts and surmises; but, besides that my father will not allow any one to be wiser than himself, it is an established maxim between these affectionate relations, never to agree in any thing.

Ros. Except being absurd; you must allow they sympathize perfectly in that—But, now we are on the subject, I desire to know, what I am to do with this wicked old justice of peace, this libidinous fa-

ther of yours? He follows me about the house like a tame goat.

Luc. Nay, I'll aſsure you he hath been a wag in his time—you muſt have a care of yourself.

Ros. Wretched me! to fall into such hands, who have been just forced to run away from my parents to avoid an odious marriage——You smile at that now; and I know you think me whimsical, as you have often told me; but you must excuse my being a little over-delicate in this particular.

AIR.

My heart's my own, my will is free,
And so shall be my voice;
No mortal man shall wed with me,
Till first he's made my choice.

Let parents rule, cry nature's laws,
And children still obey;
And is there then no saving clause,
Against tyrannic sway?

Luc. Well, but my dear mad girl——

Ros. Lucinda, don't talk to me—Was your father to go to London; meet there by accident with an old fellow as wrong-headed as himself; and in a fit of absurd friendship, agree to marry you to that old fellow's son, whom you had never seen, without consulting your inclinations, or allowing you a negative, in case he should not prove agreeable——

Luc. Why I should think it a little hard, I confeſs—yet, when I see you in the character of a chambermaid—

Ros. It is the only character, my dear, in which I could hope to lie concealed; and, I can tell you, I was reduced to the last extremity, when in consequence of our old boarding-school friendship, I applied to you to receive me in this capacity: for we expected the parties the very next week.

Luc. But had not you a meſsage from your intended spouse, to let you know he was as little inclined to such ill-concerted nuptials as you were?

Ros. More than so; he wrote to advise me, by all means, to contrive some method of breaking the off, for he had rather return to his dear studies

Oxford; and after that, what hopes could I have of being happy with him?

Luc. Then you are not at all uneasy at the strange rout you must have occasioned at home? I warrant, during this month you have been absent—

Ros. Oh! don't mention it, my dear; I have had so many admirers since I commenced Abigail, that I am quite charmed with my situation—But hold, who stalks yonder in the yard, that the dogs are so glad to see?

Luc. Daddy Hawthorn, as I live! He is come to pay my father a visit; and never more luckily, for he always forces him abroad. By the way, what will you do with yourself while I step into the house to see after my trusty meſsenger, Hodge?

Ros. No matter, I'll sit down in that arbour, and listen to the singing of the birds: you know I am fond of melancholy amusements.

Luc. So it seems, indeed: sure, Roſsetta, none of your admirers had power to touch your heart; you are not in love, I hope?

Ros. In love! that's pleasant: who do you suppose I should be in love with, pray?

Luc. Why, let me see——What do you think of Thomas, our gardener? There he is, at the other end of the walk—He's a pretty young man, and the servants say, he's always writing verses on you.

Ros. Indeed, Lucinda, you are very silly.

Luc. Indeed, Roſsetta, that blush makes you look very handsome.

Ros. Blush! I am sure I don't blush.

Luc. Ha, ha, ha!

Ros. Pshaw, Lucinda, how can you be so ridiculous?

Luc. Well, don't be angry, and I have done—— But suppose you did like him, how could you help yourself?

AIR.

When once Love's subtle poison gains
A paſsage to the female breast,
Like lightning rushing through the veins,
Each wish, and every thought's poſsest;

To heal the pangs our minds endure.
Reason in vain its skill applies;
Nought can afford the heart a cure,
But what is pleasing to the eyes.

SCENE II.

Enter Young MEADOWS.

Y. Mea. Let me see—on the fifteenth of June, at half an hour past five in the morning [*taking out a Pocket Book.*] I left my father's house, unknown to any one, having made free with a coat and jacket of our gardener's, which fitted me, by way of a disguise: so says my pocket-book; and, chance directing me to this village, on the twentieth of the same month, I procured a recommendation to the worshipful Justice Woodcock, to be the superintendant of his pumpkins and cabbages, because I would let my father see, I chose to run any lengths, rather than submit to what his obstinacy would have forced me, a marriage against my inclination, with a woman I never saw. [*Puts up the Book, and takes up a Watering-pot.*] Here I have been three weeks, and in that time I am as much altered, as if I changed my nature with my habit. 'Sdeath, to fall in love with a chambermaid! And yet, if I could forget that I am the son and heir of Sir William Meadows—But that's impossible.

AIR.

O! had I been by fate decreed
Some humble cottage swain;
In fair Rosetta's sight to feed
My sheep upon the plain;
What bliss had I been born to taste,
Which now I ne'er must know?
Ye envious pow'rs! why have ye plac'd
My fair one's lot so low?

Ha! who was it I had a glimpse of as I past by that arbour! Was it not she sat reading there! The trembling of my heart tells me my eyes wer mistaken—Here she comes.

SCENE III.

Young MEADOWS, ROSSETTA.

Ros. Lucinda was certainly in the right of it, and yet I blush to own my weakneſs even to myself—Marry, hang the fellow for not being a gentleman.

Y. Mea. I am determined I won't speak to her. [*Turning to a Rose-tree, and plucking the Flowers.*] Now or never is the time to conquer myself; besides, I have some reason to believe the girl has no aversion to me: and, as I wish not to do her an injury, it would be cruel to fill her head with notions of what can never happen. [*Hums a Tune.*] Pshaw! rot these roses, how they prick one's fingers!

Ros. He takes no notice of me; but so much the better, I'll be as indifferent as he is. I am sure the poor lad likes me; and if I was to give him any encouragement, I suppose the next thing he talked of, would be buying a ring, and being asked in church—Oh, dear pride, I thank you for that thought.

Y. Mea. Hah, going without a word! a look!—I can't bear that—Mrs. Roſsetta, I am gathering a few roses here, if you please to take them in with you.

Ros. Thank you, Mr. Thomas, but all my lady's flower-pots are full.

Y. Mea. Will you accept of them for yourself, then? [*Catching hold of her.*] What's the matter? you look as if you were angry with me.

Ros. Pray let go my hand.

Y. Mea. Nay, prithee, why is this? you shan't go, I have something to say to you.

Ros. Well, but I must go, I will go; I desire, Mr. Thomas—

AIR.

Gentle youth, ah, tell me why
Still you force me thus to fly?
Cease, oh! cease, to persevere;
Speak not what I must not hear;
To my heart its ease restore;
Go, and never see me more.

SCENE IV.

Young MEADOWS.

This girl is a riddle—That she loves me, I think there is no room to doubt; she takes a thousand opportunities to let me see it: and yet, when I speak to her, she will hardly give me an answer; and, if I attempt the smallest familiarity, is gone in an instant—I feel my paſsion for her, grow every day more and more violent—Well, would I marry her?—would I make a mistreſs of her if I could?—Two things, called prudence and honour, forbid either. What am I purſuing, then? A shadow. Sure my evil genius laid this snare in my way. However, there is one comfort, it is in my power to fly from it; if so, why do I hesitate? I am diſtracted, unable to determine any thing.

AIR.

Still in hopes to get the better
Of my stubborn flame I try;
Swear this moment to forget her,
And the next my oath deny.
Now, prepar'd with scorn to treat her,
Ev'ry charm in thought I brave,
Boast my freedom, fly to meet her,
And confeſs myself a slave.

SCENE V. A Hall in Justice Woodcock's *House.*

Enter HAWTHORN, *with a Fowling-piece in his Hands, and a Net with Birds at his Girdle: and, afterwards, Justice* WOODCOCK.

AIR.

There was a jolly miller once,
Liv'd on the river Dee;
He work'd and sung, from morn till night;
No lark more blythe than he.
And this the burthen of his song,
For ever us'd to be,——
I care for nobody, not I,
If no one cares for me.

House, here, house! what all gadding, all abroad! house, I say, hilli-ho, ho!

J. Wood. Here's a noise, here's a racket! William, Robert, Hodge! why does not somebody answer? Odds my life, I believe the fellows have lost their hearing! [*Entering.*] Oh, master Hawthorn! I guefsed it was some such mad cap—Are you there?

Haw. Am I here? Yes: and, if you had been where I was three hours ago, you would find the good effects of it by this time: but you have got the lazy unwholesome London fashion, of lying a bed in a morning, and there's gout for you—Why, sir, I have not been in bed five minutes after sunrise these thirty years, am generally up before it; and I never took a dose of physic but once in my life, and that was in compliment to a cousin of mine, an apothecary, that had just set up businefs.

J. Wood. Well but, master Hawthorn, let me tell you, you know nothing of the matter; for, I say, sleep is neceſsary for a man; ay, and I'll maintain it.

Haw. What, when I maintain the contrary?——— Look you, neighbour Woodcock, you are a rich man, a man of worship, a justice of peace, and all that; but learn to know the respect that is due to the sound from the infirm; and allow me that superiority a good constitution gives me over you—Health is the greatest of all poſseſsions; and 'tis a maxim with me, that an hale cobler is a better man than a sick king.

J. Wood. Well, well, you are a sportsman.

Haw. And so would you too, if you would take my advice. A sportsman! why there is nothing like it: I would not exchange the satisfaction I feel, while I am beating the lawns and thickets about my little farm, for all the entertainments and pageantry in Christendom.

AIR.

Let gay ones and great
Make the most of their fate
From pleasure to pleasure they run;

Well, who cares a jot,
I envy them not,
While I have my dog and my gun.
For exercise, air,
To the fields I repair,
With spirits unclouded and light:
The bliſses I find,
No stings leave behind,
But health and diversion unite.

SCENE VI.

Justice WOODCOCK, HAWTHORN, HODGE.

Hodge. Did your worship call, sir?

J. Wood. Call, sir; where have you and the rest of these rascals been? but I suppose, I need not ask—You must know there is a statute, a fair for hiring servants, held upon my green to-day; we have it usually at this season of the year, and it never fails to put all the folks here-about out of their senses.

Hodge. Lord, your honour, look out, and see what a nice show they make yonder; they had got pipers, and fidlers, and were dancing as I came along, for dear life—I never saw such a mortal throng in our village in all my born days again.

Haw. Why, I like this now, this is as it should be.

J. Wood. No, no, 'tis a very foolish piece of buſineſs; good for nothing but to promote idleneſs and the getting of bastards: but I shall take measures for preventing it another year, and I doubt whether I am not sufficiently authorized already; for by an act paſsed *Anno undecimo Caroli primi*, which impowers a justice of peace, who is lord of the manor———

Haw. Come, come, never mind the act; let me tell you, this is a very proper, a very useful meeting; I want a servant or two myself, I must go see what your market affords;—and you shall go, and the girls, my little Lucy and the other young rogue, and we'll make a day on't as well as the rest.

J. Wood. I wish, master Hawthorn, I could ter you to be a little more sedate; why won't you

pattern by me, and consider your dignity?—Odds heart, I don't wonder you are not a rich man; you laugh too much ever to be rich.

Haw. Right, neighbour Woodcock! health, good-humour, and competence, is my motto: and, if my executors have a mind, they are welcome to make it my epitaph.

AIR.

The honest heart, whose thoughts are clear
From fraud, disguise, and guile,
Need neither fortune's frowning fear,
Nor court the harlot's smile.

The greatneſs that would make us grave
Is but an empty thing;
What more than mirth would mortals have?
The cheerful man's a king.

SCENE VII.

LUCINDA, HODGE.

Luc. Hist, hist, Hodge!

Hodge. Who calls? here am I.

Luc. Well, have you been?

Hodge. Been, ay I ha' been far enough, an that be all: you never knew any thing fall out so croſsly in your born days.

Luc. Why, what's the matter?

Hodge. Why you know, I dare not take a horse out of his worship's stables this morning, for fear it should be miſsed, and breed questions; and our old nag at home was so cruelly beat i'th'hoofs, that, poor beast, it had not a foot to set to ground; so I was fain to go to farmer Ploughshare's, at the Grange, to borrow the loan of his bald filly: and, would you think it? after walking all that way—de'ei from me, if the croſs-grained toad did not deny me the favour.

Luc. Unlucky!

Hodge. Well, then I went my ways to the King's-head in the village, but all their cattle were at plough: and I was as far to seek below at the turn-pike: so at last, for want of a better, I was forced take up with dame Quickset's blind mare.

Luc. Oh, then you have been?

Hodge. Yes, yes, I ha' been.

Luc. Psha! Why did not you say so at once?

Hodge. Ay, but I have had a main tiresome jaunt on't, for she is a sorry jade at best.

Luc. Well, well, did you see Mr. Eustace, and what did he say to you?—Come, quick—have you e'er a letter?

Hodge. Yes, he gave me a letter, if I ha'na lost it.

Luc. Lost it, man!

Hodge. Nay, nay, have a bit of patience: adwawns, you are always in such a hurry [*Rummaging his Pockets*] I put it somewhere in this waistcoat pocket. Oh here it is.

Luc. So, give it me.

[*Reads the Letter to herself.*

Hodge. Lord-a-mercy! how my arm achs with beating that plaguy beast; I'll be hang'd if I won'na rather ha' thrash'd half a day, than ha' ridden her.

Luc. Well, Hodge, you have done your business very well.

Hodge. Well, have not I now?

Luc. Yes—Mr. Eustace tells me in this letter, that he will be in the green lane, at the other end of the village, by twelve o'clock—You know where he came before.

Hodge. Ay, ay.

Luc. Well, you must go there; and wait till he arrives, and watch your opportunity to introduce him, across the fields, into the little summer-house, on the left side of the garden.

Hodge. That's enough.

Luc. But take particular care that nobody sees you.

Hodge. I warrant you.

Luc. Nor for your life, drop a word of it to any mortal.

Hodge. Never fear me.

Luc. And Hodge——

AIR.

Hodge. Well, well, say no more;
Sure you told me before;
I see the full length of my tether;
Do you think I'm a fool,
That I need go to school?
I can spell you and put you together.

A word to the wise,
Will always suffice;
Addsniggers go talk to your parrot;
I'm not such an elf,
Though I say it myself,
But I know a sheep's head from a carrot.

SCENE VIII.

LUCINDA.

How severe is my case! Here I am obliged to carry on a clandestine correspondence with a man in all respects my equal, because the oddity of my father's temper is such, that I dare not tell him I have ever yet seen the person I should like to marry—But perhaps he has quality in his eye, and hopes, one day or other, as I am his only child, to match me with a title—vain imagination!

AIR.

Cupid, God of soft persuasion
Take the helpless lover's part:
Seize, oh seize some kind occasion,
To reward a faithful heart.

Justly those we tyrants call,
Who the body would enthral;
Tyrants of more cruel kind,
Those, who would enslave the mind.

What is grandeur? foe to rest,
Childish mummery at best.
Happy I in humble state;
Catch, ye fools, the glittering bait.

SCENE IX. A Field with a Stile.

Enter HODGE, *followed by* MARGERY; *and, some Time after, enter Young* MEADOWS.

Hodge. What does the wench follow me for? Odds flesh, folk may well talk, to see you dangling after me every where, like a tantony pig: find some other road, can't you; and don't keep wherreting me with your nonsense.

Mar. Nay, pray you, Hodge, stay, and let me speak to you a bit.

Hodge. Well; what sayn you?

Mar. Dear heart; how can you be so barbarous? and is this the way you serve me after all: and won't you keep your word, Hodge?

Hodge. Why no I won't, I tell you; I have chang'd my mind.

Mar. Nay but surely, surely—Consider Hodge, you are obligated in conscience to make me an honest woman.

Hodge. Obligated in conscience! How am I obligated?

Mar. Because you are; and none but the basest of rogues would bring a poor girl to shame, and afterwards leave her to the wide world.

Hodge. Bring you to shame! Don't make me speak, Madge, don't make me speak.

Mar. Yes do, speak your worst.

Hodge. Why then, if you go to that, you were fain to leave your own village down in the West, for a bastard you had by the clerk of the parish, and I'll bring the man shall say it to your face.

Mar. No, no, Hodge, 'tis no such thing, 'tis a base lie of farmer Ploughshare's—But I know what makes you false-hearted to me, that you may keep company with young madam's waiting-woman, and I am sure she's no fit body for a poor man's wife.

Hodge. How should you know what she's fit for? She's fit for as much as you, mayhap; don't find fault with your betters, Madge. [*Seeing Young Meadows.*] Oh! master Thomas, I have a word or two to say to you; pray did not you go down the

village one day last week with a basket of something upon your shoulder?

Y. Mea. Well, and what then?

Hodge. Nay, not much, only the ostler at the Greenman was saying, as how there was a paſsenger at their house as see'd you go by, and said he know'd you; and axt a mort of questions—So I thought I'd tell you.

Y. Mea. The devil! ask questions about me! I know nobody in this part of the country; there must be some mistake in it.—Come hither, Hodge.

Mar. A nasty ungrateful fellow, to use me at this rate, after being to him as I have.—Well, well, I wish all poor girls would take warning by my misfap, and never have nothing to say to none of them.

AIR.

How happy were my days, till now!
I ne'er did sorrow feel,
I rose with joy to milk my cow,
Or take my spinning-wheel.

My heart was lighter than a fly,
Like any bird I sung,
Till he pretended love, and I
Believ'd his flatt'ring tongue.

Oh the fool, the silly silly fool,
Who trusts what man may be;
I wish I was a maid again,
And in my own country.

SCENE X. A Green, with the Prospect of a Village, and the Representation of a Statute or Fair.

Enter Justice WOODCOCK, HAWTHORN, *Mrs.* DEBORAH WOODCOCK, LUCINDA, ROSSETTA, *Young* MEADOWS, HODGE, *and several Country People.*

Hodge. This way, your worship, this way. Why don't you stand aside there? Here's his worship a coming.

Countrymen. His worship!

J. Wood. Fye, fye, what a crowd's this! Odd, I'll put some of them in the stocks. [*Striking a Fellow*] Stand out of the way, sirrah.

Haw. For shame, neighbour. Well, my lad, are you willing to serve the king?

Countryman. Why, can you list me? Serve the king, master! no, no, I pay the king, that's enough for me. Ho, ho, ho!

Haw. Well said, Sturdy-boots.

J. Wood. Nay, if you talk to them, they'll answer you.

Haw. I would have them do so, I like they should.—Well, madam, is not this a fine sight? I did not know my neighbour's estate had been so well peopled.—Are all these his own tenants?

Mrs. Deb. More than are good of them, Mr. Hawthorn. I don't like to see such a parcel of young hufsys fleering with the fellows.

Haw. There's a lafs [*Beck'ning to a country Girl.*] Come hither, my pretty maid. What brings you here? [*Chucking her under the Chin.*] Do you come to look for a service?

C. Girl. Yes, an't please you.

Haw. Well, and what place are you for?

C. Girl. All work, an't please you.

J. Wood. Ay, ay, I don't doubt it; any work you'll put her to.

Mrs. Deb. She looks like a brazen one—Go, hufsy.

Haw. Here's another. [*Catching a Girl that goes by.*] What health, what bloom!—This is Nature's work; no art, no daubing. Don't be ashamed, child; those cheeks of thine are enough to put a whole drawing-room out of countenance.

SCENE XI.

Justice WOODCOCK, HAWTHORN, *Mrs.* DEBORAH WOODCOCK, LUCINDA, ROSSETTA, *Young* MEADOWS, HODGE, *and Men and Women-servants.*

Hodge. Now, your honour, now the sport will come. The gut-scrapers are here, and some among them are going to sing and dance. Why there

the like of our statute, mun, in five counties; others are but fools to it.

Servant-man. Come, good people, make a ring, and stand out, fellow servants, as many of you as are willing, and able to bear a bob. We'll let my masters and mistresses see we can do something at least; if they won't hire us, it shan't be our fault. Strike up the Servants' Medley.

AIR.

House Maid.

I pray ye, gentles, list to me,
I'm young, and strong, and clean you see;
I'll not turn tail to any she,
For work that's in the country.
Of all your house the charge I take,
I wash, I scrub, I brew, I bake;
And more can do than here I'll speak,
Depending on your bounty.

Footman.

Behold a blade, who knows his trade
In chamber, hall, and entry:
And what though here I now appear,
I've serv'd the best of gentry.
A footman would you have
I can dress, and comb, and shave;
For I a handy lad am:
On a message I can go,
And slip a billet doux,
With your humble servant, madam.

Cook Maid.

Who wants a good cook, my hand they must cross;
For plain wholesome dishes I'm ne'er at a loss;
And what are your soups, your ragouts, and your sauce,
Compar'd to old English roast beef?

Carter.

If you want a young man, with a true honest heart,
Who knows how to manage a plough and a cart,
Here's one for your purpose, come take me and try;
You'll say you ne'er met with a better nor I,
Ge ho Dobbin, &c.

CHORUS.

My masters and mistreſses, hither repair;
What servants you want, you'll find in our fair;
Men and Maids fit for all sorts of stations there be;
And, as for the wages, we shan't disagree.

ACT II.

SCENE I. A Parlour in Justice Woodcock's *House.*

LUCINDA, EUSTACE.

Luc. Well, am not I a bold adventurer, to bring you into my father's house at noon-day? Though, to say the truth, we are safer here than in the garden; for there is not a human creature under the roof besides ourselves.

Eust. Then why not put our scheme into execution this moment? I have a post-chaise ready.

Luc. Fye: how can you talk so lightly? I protest I am afraid to have any thing to do with you; your paſsion seems too much founded on appetite; and my aunt Deborah says—

Eust. What! by all the rapture my heart now feels—

Luc. Oh to be sure, promise and vow; it sounds prettily, and never fails to impose upon a fond female.

AIR.

We women like weak Indians trade,
Whose judgment tinsel shew decoys;
Dupes to our folly we are made,
While artful man the gain enjoys:
We give our treasure, to be paid
A paltry, poor return! in toys.

Eust. Well, I see you've a mind to divert yourself with me; but I wish I could prevail on you to be a little serious.

Luc. Seriously then, what would you desire me to say? I have promised to run away with you; which is as great a conceſsion as any reasonable lover can expect from his mistreſs.

Eust. Yes; but, you dear provoking angel, you have not told me, when you will run away with me.

Luc. Why that, I confeſs, requires some consideration.

Eust. Yet remember, while you are deliberating, the season, now so favourable to us, may elapse, never to return.

AIR.

Think, my fairest, how delay
Danger every moment brings;
Time flies swift, and will away;
Time that's ever on its wings:
Doubting and suspense at best,
Lovers late repentance cost;
Let us, eager to be blest,
Seize occasion e'er 'tis lost.

SCENE II.

LUCINDA, EUSTACE, *Justice* WOODCOCK, *Mrs.* DEBORAH WOODCOCK.

J. Wood. Why, here is nothing in the world in this house but caterwauling from morning till night, nothing but caterwauling. Hoity toity; who have we here?

Luc. My father, and my aunt!

Eust. The devil! What shall we do?

Luc. Take no notice of them, only observe me. [*Speaks aloud to Eustace.*] Upon my word, sir, I don't know what to say to it, unleſs the Justice was at home; he is just stepp'd into the village with some company; but, if you'll sit down a moment, I dare swear he will return—[*Pretends to see the Justice.*]—O! sir, here is my papa!

J. Wood. Here is your papa, huſsy! Who's this you have got with you? Hark you, sirrah, who are you, ye dog? and what's your buſineſs here?

Eust. Sir, this is a language I am not used to.

J. Wood. Don't answer me, you rascal—I am a justice of the peace; and if I hear a word out of your mouth, I'll send you to jail, for all your lac'd hat.

Mrs. Deb. Send him to jail, brother, that's right.

J. Wood. And how do you know it's right? How should you know any thing's right?—Sister Deborah, you are never in the right.

Mrs. Deb. Brother, this is the man I have been telling you about so long.

J. Wood. What man, goody Wise-acre!

Mrs. Deb. Why, the man your daughter has an intrigue with: but I hope you will not believe it now, though you see it with your own eyes—Come, hufsy, confefs, and don't let your father make a fool of himself any longer.

Luc. Confefs what, aunt? This gentleman is a music-master: he goes about the country, teaching ladies to play and sing; and has been recommended to instruct me: I could not turn him out when he came to offer his service; and did not know what answer to give him till I saw my papa.

J. Wood. A music-master!

Eust. Yes, sir, that's my profefsion.

Mrs. Deb. It's a lie, young man; it's a lie. Brother, he is no more a music-master, than I am a music-master.

J. Wood. What then, you know better than the fellow himself, do you? and you will be wiser than all the world?

Mrs. Deb. Brother, he does not look like a music master.

J. Wood. He does not look! ha! ha! ha! Was ever such a poor stupe! Well, and what does he look like, then? But I suppose you mean, he is not drefsed like a music-master, because of his ruffles, and this bit of garnishing about his coat—which seems to be copper too—Why, you silly wretch, these whipper-snappers set up for gentlemen, now-a-days, and give themselves as many airs as if they were people of quality.—Hark you, friend, I suppose you don't come within the vagrant act? You have some settled habitation—Where do you live?

Mrs. Deb. It's an easy matter for him to tell you a wrong place.

J. Wood. Sister Deborah, don't provoke me.

Mrs. Deb. I wish, brother, you would let me examine him a little.

J. Wood. You shan't say a word to him, you shan't say a word to him.

Mrs. Deb. She says he was recommended here, brother; ask him by whom?

J. Wood. No, I won't now, because you desire it.

Luc. If my papa did ask the question, aunt, it would be very easily resolved.

Mrs. Deb. Who bid you speak, Mrs. Nimble Chops? I suppose the man has a tongue in his head to answer for himself.

J. Wood. Will nobody stop that prating old woman's mouth for me? Get out of the room.

Mrs. Deb. Well, so I can, brother; I don't want to stay: but, remember, I tell you, you will make yourself ridiculous in this affair: for, through your own obstinacy, you will have your daughter run away with, before your face.

J. Wood. My daughter! who will run away with my daughter?

Mrs. Deb. That fellow will.

J. Wood. Go, go, you are a wicked, censorious woman.

Luc. Why, sure, madam, you must think me very coming, indeed.

J. Wood. Ay, she judges of others by herself; I remember when she was a girl: her mother dared not trust her the length of her apron-string; she was clambering upon every fellow's back.

Mrs. Deb. I was not.

J. Wood. You were.

Luc. Well, but why so violent?

AIR.

Believe me, dear aunt,
If you rave thus, and rant,
You'll never a lover persuade;
The men will all fly,
And leave you to die,
Oh, terrible chance! an old maid.

How happy the lafs,
Muft she come to this pafs,
Who ancient virginity 'scapes!
'Twere better on earth
Have five brafs at a birth,
Than in hell be a leader of apes.

SCENE III.

Juftice WOODCOCK, LUCINDA, EUSTACE.

J. Wood. Well done, Lucy, send her about her buſineſs; a troubleſome, foolish creature, does she think I want to be directed by her?—Come hither, my lad, you look tolerable honeſt.

Euſt. I hope, sir, I shall never give you cauſe to alter your opinion.

J. Wood. No, no, I am not easily deceived, I am generally pretty right in my conjectures.——You muſt know, I had once a little notion of music myself, and learned upon the fiddle; I could play the Trumpet Minnet, and Buttered Peas, and two or three tunes. I remember, when I was in London, about thirty years ago, there was a song, a great favourite at our club at Nando's coffee-houſe; Jack Pickle uſed to sing it for us, a droll fish! but 'tis an old thing, I dare swear you have heard of it often.

AIR.

When I followed a lafs that was froward and shy,
Oh! I stuck to her stuff, till I made her comply;
Oh! I took her so lovingly round the waist,
And I smack'd her lips and held her fast:
When hugg'd and haul'd,
She squeal'd and squall'd;
But, though she vow'd all I did was in vain,
Yet I pleas'd her so well that she bore it again:
Then hoity, toity,
Whisking, and frisking,
Green was her gown upon the grafs;
Oh! such were the joys of our dancing days.

Euſt. Very well, sir, upon my word.

J. Wood. No, no, I forget all those things now:

but I could do a little at them once;—Well, stay and eat your dinner, and we'll talk about your teaching the girl—Lucy, take your master to your spinnet, and shew him what you can do—I must go and give some orders; ' then hoity, toity,' &c.

SCENE IV.

LUCINDA, EUSTACE.

Luc. My sweet, pretty papa, your most obedient humble servant; hah, hah, hah! was ever so whimsical an accident? Well, sir, what do you think of this?

Eust. Think of it! I am in a maze.

Luc. O your awkwardness! I was frightened out of my wits, lest you should not take the hint; and, if I had not turned matters so cleverly, we should have been utterly undone.

Eust. 'Sdeath! why would you bring me into the house? we could expect nothing else: besides, since they did surprise us, it would have been better to have discovered the truth.

Luc. Yes, and never have seen one another afterwards. I know my father better than you do; he has taken it into his head, I have no inclination for a husband; and let me tell you, that is our best security; for if once he has said a thing, he will not be easily persuaded to the contrary.

Eust. And pray what am I to do now?

Luc. Why, as I think all danger is pretty well over, since he hath invited you to dinner with him, stay; only be cautious of your behaviour; and, in the mean time, I will consider what is next to be done.

Eust. Had not I better go to your father?

Luc. Do so, while I endeavour to recover myself a little out of the flurry this affair has put me in.

Eust. Well, but what sort of a parting is this, without so much as your servant, or good bye to you? No ceremony at all? Can you afford me no token to keep up my spirits till I see you again?

Luc. Ah, childish!

Eust. My angel!

AIR.

Eust. Let rakes and libertines, resign'd
To sensual pleasures, range!
Here all the sex's charms I find,
And ne'er can cool or change.

Luc. Let vain coquets and prudes conceal
What most their hearts desire;
With pride my paſsion I reveal,
Oh! may it ne'er expire.

Both. The sun shall cease to spread its light,
The stars their orbits leave,
And fair creation sink in night,
When I my dear deceive.

SCENE V. A Garden.

Enter ROSSETTA, *musing.*

If ever poor creature was in a pitiable condition, surely I am. The devil take this fellow, I cannot get him out of my head; and yet I would fain persuade myself I don't care for him: well but surely I am not in love: let me examine my heart a little: I saw him kiſsing one of the maids the other day; I could have boxed his ears for it, and have done nothing but find fault and quarrel with the girl ever since. Why was I uneasy at his toying with another woman? what was it to me?—Then I dream of him almost every night—but that may proceed from his being generally uppermost in my thoughts all day: Oh! worse and worse!—Well, he is certainly a pretty lad; he has something uncommon about him, considering his rank:—And now, let me only put the case, if he was not a servant, would I, or would I not, prefer him to all the men I ever saw? Why, to be sure, if he was not a servant—In short, I'll ask myself no more questions, for the further I examine, the leſs reason I shall have to be satisfied.

AIR.

How bleſs'd the maid, whose bosom
No head-strong paſsion knows;
Her days in joy she paſses,
Her nights in calm repose.

Where'er her fancy leads her,
No pain, no fear invades her;
But pleasure,
Without measure,
From ev'ry object flows.

SCENE VI.

Young MEADOWS, ROSSETTA.

Y. Mea. Do you come into the garden, Mrs. Rossetta, to put my lilies and roses out of countenance; or, to save me the trouble of watering my flowers, by reviving them? The sun seems to have hid himself a little, to give you an opportunity of supplying his place.

Ros. Where could he get that now? he never read it in the Academy of Compliments.

Y. Mea. Come, don't affect to treat me with contempt; I can suffer any thing better than that; in short, I love you; there is no more to be said: I am angry with myself for it, and strive all I can against it; but, in spite of myself, I love you.

AIR.

In vain, I ev'ry art eſsay,
To pluck the venom'd shaft away,
That rankles in my heart:
Deep in the centre fix'd and bound—
My efforts but enlarge the wound,
And fiercer make the smart.

Ros. Really, Mr. Thomas, this is very improper language; it is what I don't understand; I can't suffer it, and, in short, I don't like it.

Y. Mea. Perhaps you don't like me.

Ros. Well, perhaps I don't.

Y. Mea. Nay, but 'tis not so; come, confeſs you love me.

Ros. Confeſs! indeed I shall confeſs no such thing: besides, to what purpose should I confeſs it?

Y. Mea. Why, as you say, I don't know to what purpose; only, it would be a satisfaction to me to hear you say so; that's all.

Ros. Why, if I did love you, I can aſsure you,

you won'd never be the better for it—Women are apt enough to be weak; we cannot always answer for our inclinations, but it is in our power not to give way to them; and, if I was so silly; I say, if I was so indiscreet, which I hope I am not, as to entertain an improper regard, when people's circumstances are quite unsuitable, and there are obstacles in the way that cannot be surmounted—

Y. Mea. Oh! to be sure, Mrs. Rosetta, to be sure: you are entirely in the right of it—I—know very well, you and I can never come together.

Ros. Well then, since that is the case, as I assure you it is, I think we had better behave accordingly.

Y. Mea. Suppose we make a bargain, then, never to speak to one another any more?

Ros. With all my heart.

Y. Mea. Nor look at, nor, if possible, think of, one another?

Ros. I am very willing.

Y. Mea. And, as long as we stay in the house together, never to take any notice?

Ros. It is the best way.

Y. Mea. Why, I believe it is—Well, Mrs. Rosetta——

AIR.

Ros. Begone——I agree
From this moment we're free:
Already the matter I've sworn:
Y. Mea. Yet let me complain
Of the fates that ordain—
A trial so hard to be borne.
Ros. When things are not fit,
We should calmly submit;
No cure in reluctance we find:
Y. Mea. Then thus I obey,
Tear your image away,
And banish you quite from my mind.

Ros. Well, now, I think, I am somewhat easier: I am glad I have come to this explanation with him, because it puts an end to things at once.

Y. Mea. Hold, Mrs. Rosetta, pray stay a mor

—The airs this girl gives herself are intolerable: I find now the cause of her behaviour; she despises the meanneſs of my condition, thinking a gardener below the notice of a lady's waiting-woman: 'ſdeath, I have a good mind to discover myself to her.

Ros. Poor wretch! he does not know what to make of it: I believe he is heartily mortified, but I must not pity him.

Y. Mea. It shall be so: I will discover myself to her, and leave the house directly.—Mrs. Roſetta—[*Starting back.*]—Pox on it, yonder's the Justice come into the garden!

Ros. O Lord! he will walk round this way; pray go about your buſineſs; I would not for the world he should see us together.

Y. Mea. The devil take him: he's gone acroſs the parterre, and can't hobble here this half hour: I must and will have a little conversation with you.

Ros. Some other time.

Y. Mea. This evening, in the green-house, at the lower end of the canal; I have something to communicate to you of importance. Will you meet me there?

Ros. Meet you!

Y. Mea. Ay; I have a secret to tell you; and I swear, from that moment, there shall be an end of every thing betwixt us.

Ros. Well, well, pray leave me now.

Y. Mea. You'll come then?

Ros. I don't know, perhaps I may.

Y. Mea. Nay, but promise.

Ros. What ſignifies promising; I may break my promise—but, I tell you, I will.

Y. Mea. Enough—Yet, before I leave you, let me desire you to believe I love you more than ever man loved woman; and that when I relinquish you, I give up all that can make my life supportable.

AIR.

Oh! how shall I, in language weak,
My ardent paſsion tell;
Or form my falt'ring tongue to speak,
That cruel word, Farewell?

Farewell—but know, though thus we part,
My thoughts can never stray:
Go where I will, my constant heart
Must with my charmer stay.

SCENE VII.

ROSSETTA, *Justice* WOODCOCK.

Ros. What can this be that he wants to tell me? I have a strange curiosity to hear it, methinks—well—

J. Wood. Hem! hem! Roſsetta!

Ros. So, I thought the devil would throw him in my way; now for a courtship of a different kind; but I'll give him a surfeit—Did you call me, sir?

J. Wood. Ay, where are you running so fast?

Ros. I was only going into the house, sir.

J. Wood. Well, but come here: come here, I say. [*Looking about.*] How do you do, Roſsetta?

Ros. Thank you, sir, pretty well.

J. Wood. Why you look as fresh and bloomy to-day—Adad, you little slut, I believe you are painted.

Ros. O sir! you are pleased to compliment.

J. Wood. Adad, I believe you are—let me try—

Ros. Lord, sir!

J. Wood. What brings you into this garden so often, Roſsetta? I hope you don't get eating green fruit and trash; or have you a hankering after some lover in dowlas, who spoils my trees by engraving true-lovers knots on them, with your horn and buck-handled knives? I see your name written upon the ceiling of the servants' hall, with the smoke of a candle; and I suspect——

Ros. Not me, I hope, sir—No, sir; I am of another gueſs mind, I aſsure you; for, I have heard say, men are false and fickle——

J. Wood. Ay, that's your fianting, idle, young fellows; so they are; and they are so damn'd impudent, I wonder a woman will have any thing to say to them; besides, all that they want is something to brag of, and tell again.

Ros. Why, I own, sir, if ever I was to make a

slip, it should be with an elderly gentleman—about seventy, or seventy-five years of age.

J. Wood. No, child, that's out of reason; though I have known many a man turned of threescore with a hale constitution.

Ros. Then, sir, he should be troubled with the gout, have a good strong, substantial, winter cough—and I should not like him the worse—if he had a small touch of the rheumatism.

J. Wood. Pho, pho, Roſsetta, this is jesting.

Ros. No, sir, every body has a taste, and I have mine.

J. Wood. Well, but Roſsetta, have you thought of what I was saying to you?

Ros. What was it, sir?

J. Wood. Ah! you know, you know, well enough, huſsy.

Ros. Dear sir, consider "my soul; would you "have me endanger my soul?

J. Wood. "No, no—Repent.

Ros. "Besides, sir, consider," what has a poor servant to depend on but her character? And, I have heard, you gentlemen will talk one thing before, and another after.

J. Wood. I tell you again, these are the idle, flashy young dogs: but when you have to do with a staid, sober man——

Ros. And a magistrate, sir!

J. Wood. Right; it's quite a different thing——— Well, shall we, Roſsetta, shall we?

Ros. Really, sir, I don't know what to say to it.

AIR.

Young I am, and sore afraid:
Wou'd you hurt a harmleſs maid?
Lead an innocent astray?
Tempt me not, kind sir, I pray.
Men too often we believe:
And, should you my faith deceive,
Ruin first and then forsake,
Sure my tender heart wou'd break.

J. Wood. Why, you silly girl, I won't do you any arm.

Ros. Won't you, sir?

J. Wood. Not I.

Ros. But won't you indeed, sir?

J. Wood. Why I tell you I won't.

Ros. Ha, ha, ha!

J. Wood. Hufsy, Hufsy!

Ros. Ha, ha, ha!—Your servant, sir, your servant.

J. Wood. Why, you impudent, audacious—

SCENE VIII.

Justice WOODCOCK, HAWTHORN.

Haw. So, so, justice at odds with gravity! his worship playing at romps!—Your servant, sir.

J. Wood. Haw: friend Hawthorn!

Haw. I hope I don't spoil sport, neighbour: I thought I had the glimpse of a petticoat as I came in here.

J. Wood. Oh! the maid. Ay, she has been gathering a salad—But come hither, master Haw thorn, and I'll shew you some alterations I intend to make in my garden.

Haw. No, no, I am no judge of it; besides, I want to talk to you a little more about this—Tell me, sir Justice, were you helping your maid to gather a salad here, or consulting her taste in your improvements, eh? Ha, ha, ha! Let me see, all among the roses; egad, I like your notion: but you look a little blank upon it: you are ashamed of the busineſs, then, are you?

AIR.

Oons! neighbour, ne'er blush for a trifle like this;
What harm with a fair one to toy and to kiſs?
The greatest and gravest—a truce with grimace—
Would do the same thing, were they in the same place.
No age, no profeſsion, no station is free;
To sovereign beauty mankind bends the knee:
That power, resistleſs, no strength can oppose,
We all love a pretty girl—under the rose.

J. Wood. I profeſs, master Hawthorn, this is all Indian, all Cherokee language to me; I don't understand a word of it.

Haw. No, may be not: well, sir, will you read this letter, and try whether you can understand that? it is just brought by a servant, who stays for an answer.

J. Wood. A letter, and to me? [*Taking the Letter.*] Yes, it is to me; and yet I am sure it comes from no correspondent, that I know of. Where are my spectacles? not but I can see very well without them, master Hawthorn; but this seems to be a sort of a crabbed hand.

'SIR,

'I am ashamed of giving you this trouble; but, I am informed there is an unthinking boy, a son of mine, now disguised and in your service, in the capacity of a gardener: Tom is a little wild, but an honest, lad, and no fool either, though I am his father that say it.' Tom—oh, this is Thomas, our gardener; I always thought that he was a better man's child than he appeared to be, though I never mentioned it.

Haw. Well, well, sir, pray let's hear the rest of the letter.

J. Wood. Stay, where is the place? Oh, here:—'I am come in quest of my run-away, and write this at an inn in your village, while I am swallowing a morsel of dinner: because, not having the pleasure of your acquaintance, I did not care to intrude, without giving you notice.' (Whoever this person is, he understands good manners.) 'I beg leave to wait on you, sir; but desire you would keep my arrival a secret, particularly from the young man.

'WILLIAM MEADOWS.'

I'll assure you, a very well worded, civil letter. Do you know any thing of the person who writes it, neighbour?

Haw. Let me consider—Meadows—by dad I believe it is Sir William Meadows of Northamptonshire; and, now I remember, I heard, sometime ago, that the heir of that family had absconded, on account of a marriage that was disagreeable to him. It is a good many years since I have seen Sir William, but were once well acquainted: and, if you please, will go and conduct him to the house.

J. Wood. Do so, master Hawthorn, do so—— But, pray what sort of a man is this Sir William Meadows? Is he a wise man?

Haw. There is no occasion for a man that has five thousand pounds a year, to be a conjuror; but I suppose you ask that question because of this story about his son; taking it for granted, that wise parents make wise children.

J. Wood. No doubt of it, master Hawthorn, no doubt of it—I warrant we shall find now, that this young rascal has fallen in love with some minx, against his father's consent—Why, sir, if I had as many children as king Priam had, that we read of at school, in the destruction of Troy, not one of them should serve me so.

Haw. Well, well, neighbour, perhaps not; but we should remember when we were young ourselves; and I was as likely to play an old don such a trick in my day, as e'er a spark in the hundred; nay, between you and me, I had done it once, had the wench been as willing as I.

AIR.

My Dolly was the fairest thing!
Her breath disclos'd the sweets of spring;
And if for summer you wou'd seek,
'Twas painted in her eye, her cheek;
Her swelling bosom, tempting ripe,
Of fruitful autumn was the type:
But, when my tender tale I told,
I found her heart was winter cold.

J. Wood. Ah, you were always a scape-grace rattle-cap.

Haw. Odds heart, neighbour Woodcock, don't tell me, young fellows will be young fellows, though we preach till we're hoarse again; and so there's an end on't.

SCENE IX. Justice Woodcock's *Hall.*

HODGE, MARGERY.

Hodge. So, mistress, who let you in?

Mar. Why, I let myself in.

Hodge. Indeed! Marry come up! why, then pray let yourself out again. Times are come to a pretty paſs; I think you might have had the manners to knock at the door first—What does the wench stand for?

Mar. I want to know if his worship's at home.

Hodge. Well, what's your buſineſs with his worship?

Mar. Perhaps you will hear that—Look ye, Hodge, it does not signify talking, I am come, once for all, to know what you intends to do; for I won't be made a fool of any longer.

Hodge. You won't.

Mar. No, that's what I won't, by the best man that ever wore a head; I am the make-game of the whole village upon your account; and I'll try whether your master gives you toleration in your doings.

Hodge. You will?

Mar. Yes that's what I will; his worship shall be acquainted with all your pranks, and see how you will like to be sent for a soldier.

Hodge. There's the door; take a friend's advice and go about your buſineſs.

Mar. My buſineſs is with his worship; and I won't go till I sees him.

Hodge. Look you, Madge, if you make any of your orations here, never stir if I don't set the dogs at you—Will you be gone?

Mar. I won't.

Hodge. Here Towzer, [*Whistling.*] whu, whu, whu.

AIR.

Was ever poor fellow so plagu'd with a vixen?
Zouns! Madge don't provoke me, but mind what I say;
You've chose a wrong person for playing your tricks on,
So pack up your alls and be trudging away:
You'd better be quiet,
And not breed a riot;
S'blood, must I stand prating with you here all day?

I've got other matters to mind;
May hap you may think me an aſs;
But to the contrary you'll find:
A fine piece of work by the maſs!

SCENE X.

ROSSETTA, HODGE, MARGERY.

Ros. Sure I heard the voice of discord here—as I live, an admirer of mine, and, if I mistake not, a rival—I'll have some sport with them—how now, fellow-servant, what's the matter?

Hodge. Nothing, Mrs. Roſsetta, only this young woman wants to speak with his worship—Madge, follow me.

Mar. No, Hodge, this is your fine madam; but I am as good flesh and blood as she, and have as clear a skin too, tho'f I mayn't go so gay; and now she's here, I'll tell her a piece of my mind.

Hodge. Hold your tongue, will you?

Mar. No, I'll speak if I die for it.

Ros. What's the matter, I say?

Hodge. Why nothing I tell you;—Madge—

Mar. Yes, but it is something, it's all along of she, and she may be ashamed of herself.

Ros. Bleſs me, child, do you direct your discourse to me?

Mar. Yes, I do, and to nobody else; there was not a kinder soul breathing than he was till of late; I had never a croſs word from him till he kept you company; but all the girls about say, there is no such thing as keeping a sweetheart for you.

Ros. Do you hear this, friend Hodge?

Hodge. Why, you don't mind she, I hope; but if that vexes her, I do like you, I do; my mind runs upon nothing else; and if so be as you was agreeable to it, I would marry you to-night, before to-morrow.

Mar. You're a nasty monkey, you are parjur'd, you know you are, and you deserve to have your eyes tore out.

Hodge. Let me come at her—I'll teach you to call names, and abuse folk.

Mar. Do; strike me;—you a man!

Ros. Hold, hold—we shall have a battle here presently, and I may chance to get my cap tore off—— Never exasperate a jealous woman, 'tis taking a mad bull by the horns—Leave me to manage her.

Hodge. You manage her! I'll kick her.

Ros. No, no, it will be more for my credit, to get the better of her by fair means—I'll warrant I'll bring her to reason.

Hodge. Well, do so then—But may I depend upon you? when shall I speak to the parson?

Ros. We'll talk of that another time—Go.

Hodge. Madge, good bye.

Ros. The brutality of this fellow shocks me!—Oh man, man—you are all alike—A bumkin here, bred at the barn-door! had he been brought up in a court, could he have been more fashionably vicious; shew me the lord, 'squire, colonel, or captain of them all, can out-do him.

AIR.

Cease, gay seducer, pride to take,
In triumphs o'er the fair;
Since clowns as well can act the rake,
As those in higher sphere.
Where then to shun a shameful fate
Shall helpless beauty go?
In ev'ry rank, in ev'ry state,
Poor woman finds a foe.

SCENE XI.

ROSSETTA, MARGERY.

Mar. I am ready to burst, I can't stay in the place any longer.

Ros. Hold, child, come hither.

Mar. Don't speak to me, don't you.

Ros. Well, but I have something to say to you of consequence, and that will be for your good; I suppose this fellow promised you marriage.

Mar. Ay, or he should never have prevailed upon me.

Ros. Well, now you see the ill consequence of trusting to such promises: when once a man hath cheated a woman of her virtue, she has no longer

hold of him; he despises her for wanting that which he hath robbed her of; and, like a lawleſs conqueror, triumphs in the ruin he hath occasioned.

Mar. Nan!

Ros. However, I hope the experience you have got, though somewhat dearly purchased, will be of use to you for the future; and, as to any designs I have upon the heart of your lover, you may make yourself easy, for I aſsure you, I shall be no dangerous rival; so go your ways and be a good girl.

Mar. Yes—I don't very well understand her talk, but I suppose that's as much as to say she'll keep him herself; well let her, who cares? I don't fear getting better nor he is any day of the year, for the matter of that; and I have a thought come into my head that, may be, will be more to my advantage.

AIR.

Since Hodge proves ungrateful, no further I'll seek,
But go up to town in the waggon next week;
A service in London is no such disgrace,
And Register's office will get me a place:
Bet Bloſsom went there, and soon went with a friend;
Folks say in her silks she's now standing an end!
Then why should not I the same maxim pursue,
And better my fortune as other girls do?

SCENE XII.

Enter ROSSETTA *and* LUCINDA,

Ros. Ha! ha! ha! Oh admirable, most delectably ridiculous. And so your father is content he should be a music-master, and will have him such, in spite of all your aunt can say to the contrary?

Luc. My father and he, child, are the best companions you ever saw: and have been singing together the most hideous duets! Bobbing Joan, and Old Sir Simon the King. Heaven knows where Eustace could pick them up; but he has gone through half the contents of Pills to purge Melancholy with him.

Ros. And have you resolved to take wing to-night?

Luc. This very night, my dear: my swain will go from hence this evening, but no farther than' the inn, where he has left his horses; and, at twelve precisely, he will be with a post-chaise at the little gate that opens from the lawn into the road, where I have promised to meet him.

Ros. Then depend upon it, I'll bear you company.

Luc. We shall slip out when the family are asleep, and I have prepared Hodge already. Well, I hope we shall be happy.

Ros. Never doubt it.

AIR.

In love should there meet a fond pair,
Untutor'd by fashion or art;
Whose wishes are warm and sincere,
Whose words are th' excefs of the heart:
If aught of substantial delight,
On this side the stars can be found,
'Tis sure when that couple unite,
And Cupid by Hymen is crown'd.

SCENE XIII.

ROSSETTA, LUCINDA, HAWTHORN.

Haw. Lucy, where are you?

Luc. Your pleasure, sir.

Ros. Mr. Hawthorn, your servant.

Haw. What my little water-wagtail!—The very couple I wish'd to meet: come hither both of you.

Ros. Now, sir, what would you say to both of us?

Haw. Why, let me look at you a little——have you got on your best gowns, and your best faces? If not, go and trick yourselves out directly, for I'll tell you a secret—there will be a young batchelor in the house, within these three hours, that may fall to the share of one of you, if you look sharp—but whether mistrefs or maid——

Ros. Ay, marry, this is something; but how do

you know whether either mistreſs or maid will think him worth acceptance?

Haw. Follow me, follow me; I warrant you.

Luc. I can aſsure you, Mr. Hawthorn, I am very difficult to please.

Ros. And so am I, sir.

Haw. Indeed!

AIR.

Well come, let us hear what the swain must poſseſs
Who may hope at your feet to implore with succeſs?

Ros. He must be first of all
Straight, comely, and tall:
Luc. Neither aukward,
Ros. Nor foolish,
Luc. Nor apish,
Ros. Nor mulish;
Luc. *Ros.* Nor yet should his fortune be small.
Haw. What think'st of a captain?
Luc. All bluster and wounds!
Haw. What think'st of a 'ſquire?
Ros. To be left for his hounds.
Luc. The youth that is form'd to my mind,
Muſt be gentle, obliging, and kind;
Ros. Of all things in nature love me;
Have sense both to speak and to see—
Yet sometimes be silent and blind.
Haw. 'Fore George, a most rare matrimonial receipt;
Ros. *Luc.* Observe it, ye fair, in the choice of a mate;
Remember, 'tis wedlock determines your fate.

ACT III.

SCENE I. A Parlour in Justice Woodcock's *House.*

Enter Sir WILLIAM MEADOWS, *followed by* HAWTHORN.

Sir Will. Well, this is excellent, this is mighty good, this is mighty merry, faith; ha! ha! ha! was ever the like heard of? that my boy, Tom, should run away from me, for fear of being forced to marry a girl he never saw; that she should scamper from her father, for fear of being forced to marry him; and that they should run into one another's arms this way in disguise, by mere accident; against their consents, and without knowing it, as a body may say! May I never do an ill turn, master Hawthorn, if it is not one of the oddest adventures partly—

Haw. Why, Sir William, it is a romance; a novel; a pleasanter history by half, than the loves of Dorastus and Faunia: we shall have ballads made of it within these two months, setting forth, how a young 'squire became a serving man of low degree; and it will be stuck up with Margaret's Ghost and the Spanish Lady, against the walls of every cottage in the country.

Sir Will. But what pleases me best of all, master Hawthorn, is the ingenuity of the girl. May I never do an ill turn, when I was called out of the room, and the servant said she wanted to speak to me, if I knew what to make on't: but when the little gipsey took me aside, and told me her name, and how matters stood, I was quite astonished, as a body may say; and could not believe it partly; till her young friend that she is with here, assured me of the truth on't: Indeed, at last, I began to recollect her face, though I have not set eyes on her before, since she was the height of a full-grown greyhound.

Haw. Well, Sir William, your son as yet knows nothing of what has happened, nor of your being either; and, if you'll follow my counsel, we'll

have some sport with him—He and his mistreſs were to meet in the garden this evening by appointment, she's gone to dreſs herself in all her airs; will you let me direct your proceedings in this affair?

Sir Will. With all my heart, master Hawthorn, with all my heart, do what you will with me, say what you please for me; I am so overjoyed, and so happy—And may I never do an ill turn, but I am very glad to see you too; ay, and partly as much pleased at that as any thing else, for we have been merry together before now, when we were some years younger: well, and how has the world gone with you, master Hawthorn, since we saw one another last?

Haw. Why, pretty well, Sir William, I have no reason to complain: every one has a mixture of sour with his sweets: but, in the main, I believe, I have done in a degree as tolerably as my neighbours.

AIR.

The world is a well furnished table,
Where guests are promisc'ously set;
We all fare as well as we're able,
And scramble for what we can get.
My simile holds to a tittle,
Some gorge, while some scarce have a taste;
But if I'm content with a little,
Enough is as good as a feast.

SCENE II.

Sir WILLIAM MEADOWS, HAWTHORN, ROSETTA.

Ros. Sir William, I beg pardon for detaining you, but I have had so much difficulty in adjusting my borrowed plumes.—

Sir Will. May I never do an ill turn but they fit you to a T, and you look very well, so you do; Cocksbones, how your father will chuckle when he comes to hear this!—Her father, master Hawthorn, is as worthy a man as lives by bread, and has been almost out of his senses for the loſs of her—But tell

me, hussy, has not this been all a scheme, a piece of conjuration between you and my son? Faith, I am half persuaded it has, it looks so like hocus-pocus, as a body may say.

Ros. Upon my honour, Sir William, what has happened, has been the mere effect of chance; I came hither unknown to your son, and he unknown to me: I never in the least suspected that Thomas the gardener was other than his appearance spoke him; and least of all, that he was a person with whom I had so close a connection. Mr. Hawthorn can testify the astonishment I was in when he first informed me of it; but I thought it was my duty to come to an immediate explanation with you.

Sir Will. Is not she a neat wench, master Hawthorn? May I never do an ill turn but she is—But you little plaguy devil, how came this love affair between you?

Ros. I have told you the whole truth very ingenuously, sir. Since your son and I have been fellow-servants, as I may call it, in this house, I have had more than reason to suspect he had taken a liking to me; and I will own with equal frankneſs, had I not looked upon him as a person as much below me, I should have had no objection to receiving his courtship.

Haw. Well said, by the lord Harry, all above board, fair and open.

Ros. Perhaps I may be censured by some for this candid declaration; but I love to speak my sentiments; and I aſsure you, Sir William, in my opinion, I should prefer a gardener with your son's good qualities, to a knight of the shire without them.

AIR.

'Tis not wealth, it is not birth,
Can value to the soul convey;
Minds poſseſs superior worth,
Which chance nor gives, nor takes away.
Like the sun true merit shews;
By nature warm, by nature bright;
With inbred flames he nobly glows,
Nor needs the aid of borrow'd light.

Haw. Well, but, sir, we lose time—is not this about the hour appointed to meet in the garden?

Ros. Pretty near it.

Haw. Oons then, what do we stay for? Come, my old friend, come along, and by the way we will consult how to manage your interview.

Sir Will. Ay, but I must speak a word or two to my man about the horses first.

SCENE III.

ROSSETTA, HODGE.

Ros. Well—What's the buſineſs?

Hodge. Madam—Mercy on us, I crave pardon!

Ros. Why, Hodge, don't you know me?

Hodge. Mrs. Roſsetta?

Ros. Ay.

Hodge. Know you! ecod, I don't know whether I do or not; never ſtir, if I did not think it was some lady belonging to the ſtrange gentlefolks: why, you be'nt dizen'd this way to go to the ſtatute dance preſently, be you?

Ros. Have patience and you'll ſee:—but is there any thing amiſs that you came in ſo abruptly?

Hodge. Amiſs! why there's ruination.

Ros. How?—where?

Hodge. Why, with Miſs Lucinda: her aunt has catch'd she and the gentleman above ſtairs, and overheard all their love diſcourſe.

Ros. You don't ſay ſo!

Hodge. Ecod, I had like to have pop'd in among them this inſtant; but, by good luck, I heard Mrs. Deborah's voice, and run down again, as faſt as ever my legs would carry me.

Ros. Is your maſter in the houſe?

Hodge. What, his worſhip! no, no, he is gone into the fields to talk with the reapers and people.

Ros. Poor Lucinda, I wiſh I could go up to her, but I am ſo engaged with my own affairs——

Hodge. Miſtreſs Roſsetta.

Ros. Well.

Hodge. Odds bobs, I muſt have one ſmack of your ſweet lips.

Ros. Oh stand off, you know I never allow liberties.

Hodge. Nay, but why so coy, there's reason in roasting of eggs; I would not deny you such a thing.

Ros. That's kind: ha, ha, ha—But what will become of Lucinda? Sir William waits for me, I must be gone. Friendship, a moment by your leave; yet as our sufferings have been mutual, so shall our joys; I already lose the remembrance of all former pains and anxieties.

AIR.

The traveller benighted,
And led through weary ways,
The lamp of day new lighted,
With joy the dawn surveys.

The rising prospects viewing,
Each look is forward cast;
He smiles, his course pursuing,
Nor thinks of what is past.

SCENE IV.

HODGE, *Mrs.* DEBORAH WOODCOCK, LUCINDA.

Hodge. Hist, stay! don't I hear a noise?

Luc. [*Within.*] Well, but dear, dear aunt——

Mrs. Deb. [*Within.*] You need not speak to me, for it does not signify.

Hodge. Adwawns, they are coming here! ecod, I'll get out of the way—Murrain take it, this door is bolted now—So, so.

Mrs. Deb. Get along, get along; [*Driving in Lucinda before her.*] you are a scandal to the name of Woodcock; but I was resolved to find you out, for I have suspected you a great while, though your father, silly man, will have you such a poor innocent.

Luc. What shall I do?

Mrs. Deb. I was determined to discover what you and your pretended music-master were about, and lay in wait on purpose: I believe he thought to ape me, by slipping into the closet when I

knocked at the door; but I was even with him, for now I have him under lock and key, and please the fates there he shall remain till your father comes in: I will convince him of his error, whether he will or not.

Luc. You won't be so cruel, I am sure you won't: I thought I had made you my friend by telling you the truth.

Mrs. Deb. Telling me the truth, quotha! did I not over-hear your scheme of running away to-night, through the partition? did not I find the very bundles pack'd up in the room with you ready for going off? No, brazenface, I found out the truth by my own sagacity, though your father says I am a fool, but now we'll be judged who is the greatest.—And you, Mr. Rascal, my brother shall know what an honest servant he has got.

Hodge. Madam!

Mrs. Deb. You were to have been aiding and assisting them in their escape, and have been the go-between, it seems, the letter-carrier!

Hodge. Who, me, madam!

Mrs. Deb. Yes, you, sirrah.

Hodge. Miſs Lucinda, did I ever carry a letter for you? I'll make my affidavy before his worship—

Mrs. Deb. Go, go, you are a villain, hold your tongue.

Luc. I own, aunt, I have been very faulty in this affair; I don't pretend to excuse myself; but we are all subject to frailties; consider that, and judge of me by yourself; you were once young, and inexperienced as I am.

AIR.

If ever a fond inclination
Rose in your bosom to rob you of rest,
Reflect with a little compaſsion,
On the soft pangs, which prevail'd in my breast.
Oh where, where would you fly me?
Can you deny me thus torn and distrest?
Think, when my lover was by me,
Wou'd I, how cou'd I, refuse his request?
Kneeling before you, let me implore you;

Look on me sighing, crying, dying;
Ah! is there no language can move?
If I have been too complying,
Hard was the conflict 'twixt duty and love.

Mrs. Deb. This is mighty pretty romantic stuff! but you learn it out of your play-books and novels. Girls in my time had other employments, we worked at our needles, and kept ourselves from idle thoughts: before I was your age, I had finished with my own fingers a complete set of chairs, and a fire-screen in tent stitch; four counterpanes in Marseilles quilting; and the creed and the ten commandments, in the hair of our family: it was framed and glaz'd, and hung over the parlour chimney-piece, and your poor dear grandfather was prouder of it than of e'er a picture in his house. I never looked into a book, but when I said my prayers, except it was the Complete Housewife, or the great family receipt-book: whereas you are always at your studies! Ah, I never knew a woman come to good, that was fond of reading.

Luc. Well, pray, madam, let me prevail on you to give me the key to let Mr. Eustace out, and I promise, I never will proceed a step farther in this business, without your advice and approbation.

Mrs. Deb. Have not I told you already my resolution?—Where are my clogs and my bonnet? I'll go out to my brother in the fields; I'm a fool, you know, child; now let's see what the wits will think of themselves—Don't hold me—

Luc. I'm not going:—I have thought of a way to be even with you, so you may do as you please.

SCENE V.

HODGE.

Hodge. Well, I thought it would come to this, I'll be shot if I didn't—So here's a fine job—but what can they do to me—They can't send me to jail for carrying a letter, seeing there was no treason in it; and how was I obligated to know my master did not allow of their meetings:—The worst they can do, is turn me off, and I am sure the place is no such

great purchase—indeed, I should be sorry to leave Mrs. Rosetta, seeing as how matters are so near being brought to an end betwixt us; but she and I may keep company all as one; and I find Madge has been speaking with Gaffer Broadwheels, the waggoner, about her carriage up to London: so that I have got rid of she, and I am sure I have reason to be main glad of it, for she led me a wearisome life —But that's the way of them all.

A plague on those wenches, they make such a pother,
When once they have let'n a man have his will;
They're always a whining for something or other,
And cry he's unkind in his carriage.
What tho'f he speaks them ne'er so fairly,
Still they keep teazing, teazing on:
You cannot persuade 'em
Till promise you've made 'em;
And after they've got it,
They tell you—add rot it,
Their character's blasted, they're ruin'd, undone:
Then to be sure, sir,
There is but one cure, sir,
And all their discourse is of marriage.

SCENE VI. A Greenhouse.

Enter Young MEADOWS.

Y. Mea. I am glad I had the precaution to bring this suit of clothes in my bundle, though I hardly know myself in them again, they appear so strange, and feel so unwieldy. However, my gardener's jacket goes on no more—I wonder this girl does not come: [*Looking at his Watch.*] perhaps she won't come——Why then I'll go into the village, take a post-chaise and depart without any farther ceremony.

AIR.

How much superior beauty awes,
The coldest bosoms find;
But with resistless force it draws,
To sense and sweetness join'd.

The casket, where, to outward shew,
The workman's art is seen,
Is doubly valu'd, when we know
It holds a gem within.

Hark! she comes.

SCENE VII.

Enter Sir WILLIAM MEADOWS *and* HAWTHORN.

Y. Mea. Confusion! my father! What can this mean?

Sir Will. Tom, are not you a sad boy, Tom, to bring me a hundred and forty miles here—May I never do an ill turn, but you deserve to have your head broke; and I have a good mind, partly—What, sirrah, don't you think it worth your while to speak to me?

Y. Mea. Forgive me, sir, I own I have been in a fault.

Sir Will. In a fault! to run away from me because I was going to do you good—May I never do an ill turn, Mr. Hawthorn, if I did not pick out as fine a girl for him, partly, as any in England? and the rascal run away from me, and came here and turn'd gardener. And pray what did you propose to yourself, Tom? I know you were always fond of Botany, as they call it; did you intend to keep the trade going, and advertise fruit trees and flowering shrubs, to be had at Meadows's nursery?

Haw. No, Sir William, I apprehend the young gentleman designed to lay by the profession; for he has quitted the habit already.

Y. Mea. I am so astonished to see you here, sir, that I don't know what to say; but I assure you, if you had not come, I should have returned home to you directly. Pray, sir, how did you find me out?

Sir Will. No matter, Tom, no matter: it was partly by accident, as a body may say; but what does that signify—tell me, boy, how stands your stomach towards matrimony; do you think you could digest a wife now?

Y. Mea. Pray, sir, don't mention it: I shall always behave myself as a dutiful son ought: I will never marry without your consent, and I hope you won't force me to do it against my own.

Sir Will. Is not this mighty provoking, master Hawthorn? Why, sirrah, did you ever see the lady I designed for you?

Y. Mea. Sir, I don't doubt the lady's merit; but at present I am not disposed———

Haw. Nay, but young gentleman, fair and softly; you should pay some respect to your father in this matter.

Sir Will. Respect, master Hawthorn! I tell you he shall marry her, or I'll disinherit him! there's once. Look you Tom, not to make any more words of the matter, I have brought the lady here with me, and I'll see you contracted before we part; or you shall delve and plant cucumbers as long as you live.

Y. Mea. Have you brought the lady here, sir? I am sorry for it.

Sir Will. Why sorry? what then you won't marry her? we'll see that! Pray, master Hawthorn, conduct the fair one in.——Ay, sir, you may fret, and dance about, trot at the rate of fifteen miles an hour, if you please, but marry whip me, I'm resolv'd.

SCENE VIII.

Sir WILLIAM MEADOWS, HAWTHORN, *Young* MEADOWS, ROSSETTA.

Haw. Here is the lady, Sir William.

Sir Will. Come in, madam, but turn your face from him—he would not marry you because he had not seen you: but I'll let him know my choice shall be his, and he shall consent to marry you before he sees you, or not an acre of estate—Pray, sir, walk this way.

Y. Mea. Sir, I cannot help thinking your conduct a little extraordinary; but since you urge me so closely, I must tell you my affections are engaged.

Sir Will. How, Tom, how!

Y. Mea. I was determined, sir, to have got th

better of my inclination, and never have done a thing which I knew would be disagreeable to you.

Sir Will. And pray, sir, who are your affections engaged to? Let me know that.

Y. Mea. To a person, sir, whose rank and fortune may be no recommendations to her: but whose charms and accomplishments entitle her to a monarch. I am sorry, sir, it's impoſsible for me to comply with your commands, and I hope you will not be offended if I quit your presence.

Sir Will. Not I, not in the least: go about your buſineſs.

Y. Mea. Sir, I obey.

Haw. *Now, madam, is the time.*

[*Rosetta advances, Young Meadows turns round and sees her.*]

AIR.

"When we see a lover languish,
"And his truth and honour prove,
"Ah! how sweet to heal his anguish,
"And repay him love for love."

Sir Will. Well, Tom, will you go away from me now?

Haw. Perhaps, Sir William, your son does not like the lady; and if so, pray don't put a force upon his inclination.

Y. Mea. You need not have taken this method, sir, to let me see you are acquainted with my folly, whatever my inclinations are.

Sir Will. Well, but Tom, suppose I give my consent to your marrying this young woman?

Y. Mea. Your consent, sir?

"*Ros.* Come, Sir William, we have carried the "jeſt far enough; I see your son is in a kind of em- "barraſsment, and I don't wonder at it; but this "letter, which I received from him a few days be- "fore I left my father's house, will, I apprehend, "expound the riddle. He cannot be surprised "that I ran away from a gentleman who expreſsed "so much dislike to me; and what has happened, "since chance has brought us together in mas-

"querade, there is no occasion for me to inform him "of."

"*Y. Mea.*" What is all this? Pray don't make a jest of me.

Sir Will. May I never do an ill turn, Tom, if it is not truth; this is my friend's daughter.

Y. Mea. Sir!

Ros. Even so; 'tis very true indeed. In short, you have not been a more whimsical gentleman than I have a gentlewoman; but you see we are designed for one another 'tis plain.

Y. Mea. I know not, madam, what I either hear or see; a thousand things are crowding on my imagination; while, like one just awakened from a dream, I doubt which is reality, which delusion.

Sir Will. Well then, Tom, come into the air a bit, and recover yourself.

Y. Mea. Nay, dear sir, have a little patience; do you give her to me?

Sir Will. Give her to you! ay, that I do, and my bleſsing into the bargain.

Y. Mea. Then, sir, I am the happiest man in the world; I enquire no farther; here I fix the utmost limits of my hopes and happineſs.

AIR.

Y. Mea. All I wish in her obtaining,
Fortune can no more impart:
Ros. Let my eyes, my thoughts explaining,
Speak the feelings of my heart.
Y. Mea. Joy and pleasure never ceasing,
Ros. Love and length of years increasing.
Together. Thus my heart and hand surrender,
Here my faith and truth I plight;
Constant still, and kind, and tender,
May our flames burn ever bright.

Haw. Give you joy, sir, and you, fair lady—— And, under favour, I'll salute you too, if there's no fear of jealousy.

Y. Mea. And may I believe this?—Prithee tell me, dear Roſsetta.

Ros. Step into the house and I'll tell you every thing—I must intreat the good offices of Sir Will'

and Mr. Hawthorn, immediately; for I am in the utmost uneasineſs about my poor friend Lucinda.

Haw. Why, what's the matter?

Ros. I don't know, but I have reason to fear I left her just now in very disagreeable circumstances; however, I hope, if there's any mischief fallen out between her father and her lover——

Haw. The music master! I thought so.

Sir Will. What, is there a lover in the case? May I never do an ill turn, but I am glad, so I am; for we'll make a double wedding; and, by way of celebrating it, take a trip to London, to shew the brides some of the pleasures of the town. And, master Hawthorn, you shall be of the party—Come, children, go before us.

Haw. Thank you, Sir William; I'll go into the house with you, and to church to see the young folks married; but as to London, I beg to be excuſed.

AIR.

If ever I'm catch'd in those regions of smoke,
That seat of confuſion and noise,
May I ne'er know the sweets of a slumber unbroke,
Nor the pleasure the country enjoys,
Nay more, let them take me, to punish my sin,
Where, gaping, the *Cockneys* they fleece,
Clap me up with their monsters, cry, masters walk in,
And shew me for two-pence a piece.

SCENE IX. Justice Woodcock's *Hall.*

Enter Justice WOODCOCK, *Mrs.* DEB. WOODCOCK, LUCINDA, EUSTACE, HODGE.

Mrs. Deb. Why, brother, do you think I can't hear, or see, or make use of my senses? I tell you, I left that fellow locked up in her closet; and, while I have been with you, they have broke open the door, and got him out again.

J. Wood. Well, you hear what they say.

Mrs. Deb. I care not what they say; it's you encouraging them in their impudence—Hark'e, huſsy,

will you face me down that I did not lock the fellow up?

Luc. Really, aunt, I don't know what you mean; when you talk intelligibly, I'll answer you.

Eust. Seriously, madam, this is carrying the jest a little too far.

Mrs. Deb. What then, I did not catch you together in her chamber, nor over-hear your design of going off to-night, nor find the bundles packed up—

Eust. Ha, ha, ha.

Luc. Why aunt, you rave.

Mrs. Deb. Brother, as I am a Christian woman, she confeſsed the whole affair to me from first to last; and in this very place was down upon her marrow-bones for half an hour together, to beg I would conceal it from you.

Hodge. Oh Lord! Oh Lord!

Mrs. Deb. What, sirrah, would you brazen me too! Take that. [*Boxes him.*]

Hodge. I wish you would keep your hands to yourself; you strike me, because you have been telling his worship stories.

J. Wood. Why, sister, you are tipsy!

Mrs. Deb. I tipsy, brother!—I—that never touch a drop of any thing strong from year's end to year's end; but now and then a little anniseed water, when I have got the cholic.

Luc. Well, aunt, you have been complaining of the stomach-ach all day; and may have taken too powerful a dose of your cordial.

J. Wood. Come, come, I see well enough how it is; this is a lie of her own invention, to make herself appear wise: but, you simpleton, did you not know I must find you out?

SCENE X.

Enter Sir WILLIAM MEADOWS, HAWTHORN, ROSSETTA, *Young* MEADOWS.

Y. Mea. Bleſs me, sir! look who is yonder.

Sir Will. Cocksbones, Jack, honest Jack, are you there?

Eust. Plague on't, this rencounter is unlucky—— Sir William, your servant.

Sir Will. Your servant again, and again, heartily your servant; may I never do an ill turn, but I am glad to meet you.

J. Wood. Pray, Sir William, are you acquainted with this person?

Sir Will. What, with Jack Eustace! why he's my kinsman: his mother and I was cousin-germans once removed, and Jack's a very worthy young fellow, may I never do an ill turn if I tell a word of a lie.

J. Wood. Well, but Sir William, let me tell you, you know nothing of the matter; this man is a music-master; a thrummer of wire, and a scraper of cat-gut, and teaches my daughter to sing.

Sir Will. What Jack Eustace a music-master! no, no, I know him better.

Eust. 'Sdeath, why should I attempt to carry on this absurd farce any longer!—What that gentleman tells you is very true, sir; I am no music-master indeed.

J. Wood. You are not, you own it then?

Eust. Nay, more, sir, I am, as this lady has represented me [*Pointing to Mrs. Deborah.*] your daughter's lover; whom, with her own consent, I did intend to have carried off this night; but now that Sir William Meadows is here, to tell you who, and what I am, I throw myself upon your generosity, from which I expect greater advantages than I could reap from any imposition on your unsuspicious nature.

Mrs. Deb. Well, brother, what have you to say for yourself now? You have made a precious day's work of it! Had my advice been taken! Oh I am ashamed of you, but you are a weak man, and it can't be help'd; however, you should let wiser heads direct you.

Luc. Dear papa, pardon me.

Sir Will. Ay, do, sir, forgive her; my cousin Jack will make her a good husband, I'll answer for it.

Ros. Stand out of the way, and let me speak two or three words to his worship—Come, my dear sir, though you refuse all the world, I am sure you can deny me nothing: love is a venial fault—You know what I mean.——Be reconciled to your daughter, I

conjure you, by the memory of our past affections ——What, not a word!

AIR.

Go, naughty man, I can't abide you;
Are then your vows so soon forgot?
Ah! now I see if I had try'd you,
What would have been my hopeful lot.

But here I charge you—Make them happy;
Bleſs the fond pair, and crown their bliſs:
Come be a dear good natur'd puppy,
And I'll reward you with a kiſs.

Mrs. Deb. Come, turn out of the house, and be thankful my brother does not hang you, for he could do it, he's a justice of peace;—turn out of the house, I say;——

J. Wood. Who gave you authority to turn him out of the house—he shall stay where he is.

Mrs. Deb. He shan't marry my niece.

J. Wood. Shan't he? but I'll shew you the difference now. I say, he shall marry her, and what will you do about it?

Mrs. Deb. And you will give him your estate too, will you?

J. Wood. Yes, I will.

Mrs. Deb. Why I'm sure he's a vagabond.

J. Wood. I like him the better, I would have him a vagabond.

Mrs. Deb. Brother, brother!

Haw. Come, come, madam, all's very well, and I see my neighbour is what I always thought him, a man of sense and prudence.

Sir Will. May I never do an ill turn, but I say so too.

J. Wood. Here, young fellow, take my daughter, and bleſs you both together; but hark you, no money till I die; observe that.

Eust. Sir, in giving me your daughter, you bestow upon me more than the whole world would be without her.

Ros. Dear Lucinda, if words could convey the transports of my heart upon this occasion——

Luc. Words are the tools of hypocrites, the pr[illegible]

tenders to friendship; only let us resolve to preserve our esteem for each other.

Y. Mea. Dear Jack, I little thought we should ever meet in such odd circumstances—but here has been the strangest buſineſs between this lady and me——

Hodge. What then, Mrs. Roſsetta, are you turned false-hearted after all; will you marry Thomas the gardener? and did I forsake Madge for this?

Ros. Oh lord! Hodge, I beg your pardon; I protest I forgot; but I must reconcile you and Madge, I think, and give you a wedding-dinner to make you amends.

Hodge. N—ah.

Haw. Adds me, sir, here are some of your neighbours come to visit you, and I suppose to make up the company of your statute-ball; yonder's music too I see; shall we enjoy ourselves? If so, give me your hand.

J. Wood. Why, here's my hand, and we will enjoy ourselves; Heaven bleſs you both, children, I say—Sister Deborah, you are a fool.

Mrs. Deb. You are a fool, brother; and mark my words——But I'll give myself no more trouble about you.

Haw. Fiddlers strike up.

AIR.

Hence with cares, complaints, and frowning,
Welcome jollity and joy;
Ev'ry grief in pleasure drowning,
Mirth this happy night employ:
Let's to friendship do our duty,
Laugh and sing some good old strain;
Drink a health to love and beauty——
May they long in triumph reign.

A

TABLE OF THE SONGS.

WITH THE NAMES OF THE SEVERAL COMPOSERS.

*N. B. Those marked thus * were composed on purpose for this Opera.*

A NEW OVERTURE BY MR. ABEL.

ACT I.

HOPE, thou nurse of young desire....*Mr Weldon.*
Whence can you inherit . ..... *Abos.*
My heart's my own, my will is free ..... *Arne.*
When once love's subtle poison gains .....*Arne.*
*Oh had I been by Fate decreed ..... *Howard.*
Gentle youth, ah tell me why.....*Arne.*
*Still in hopes to get the better ..... *Arne.*
There was a jolly miller once
Let gay ones and great ..... *Baildon.*
The honest heart whose thoughts are free.. *Festing.*
Well, well, say no more ..... Larry Gorgan.
Cupid, god of soft persuasion .....*Giardini.*
How happy were my days till now.....*Arne.*
A medley

ACT II.

We women like weak Indians trade .... *Paradies.*
Think my fairest, how delay .....*Arne.*
*Believe me, dear aunt .... *Arne.*
When I follow'd a lass that was froward and shy
Let rakes and libertines resign'd ..... *Handel.*

How blest the maid whose bosom . ..... *Gallupi.*
In vain I every art afsay..... *Arne.*
Begone, I agree..... *Arne.*
Oh how shall I in language weak——..... *Cary.*
Young I am, and sore afraid ..... *Gallupi.*
Oons, neighbour, ne'er blush..... *Arne.*
My Dolly was the fairest thing..... *Handel.*
Was ever poor fellow .... *Agus.*
Cease, gay seducers, pride to take..... ..*Arne.*
Since Hodge proves ungrateful ..... *Arne.*
In love should there meet a fond pair....*Bernard.*
*Well come let us hear

ACT III.

The world is a well furnish'd table ..... *Arne.*
It is not wealth, it is not birth ..... *Giardini.*
*The traveller benighted..... *Arne.*
If ever a fond inclination ... . *Geminiani.*
Plague o' these wenches, &c. ....St. Patrick's Day.
*How much superior beauty awes ... .*Howard.*
When we see a lover languish..... ....*Arne.*
All I wish in her obtaining ..... *Arne.*
If ever I'm catch'd in those regions .....*Boyce.*
*Go, naughty man, I can't abide you .....*Arne.*
Hence with cares .... *Boyce.*

ZARA.

A

TRAGEDY.

BY

AARON HILL, ESQ.

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PICCADILLY.

1805.

TO

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

THE

PRINCE.

SIR,

WRITERS, who mean no *Int'rest*, but their *Arts*;
Of *undepending* Minds, and *stedfast* Hearts,
Disclaiming *Hopes* will empty *Forms* neglect;
Nor need *Permission*———to addreſs *Respect*.

Frank, as the manly Faith of *ancient* Time,
Let *Truth*, for once, approach the *Great*, in *Rhyme!*
Nor Public Benefit, misguided, *stray*,
Because a *Private Wisher* points its Way.

If wond'ring, *here*, your Greatneſs condescends
To ask, *What's He, who thus, uncall'd, attends?*
Smile, at a *Suitor*, who, in Courts, untrac'd,
Pleas'd, if *o'erlook'd*, thus *owns* his humble *Taste*.—

Vow'd an *Unenvier* of the busy *Great*;
Too plain for *Flatt'ry*; and, too calm for *Hate*:
Hid to be *Happy*; who surveys, *unknown*,
The pow'rleſs *Cottage*, and the peaceleſs *Throne*;
A silent *Subject* to His *own Controul*;
Of active *passions*, but unyielding *Soul*;
Engross'd by No Pursuits, *amus'd* by *All*;
But, *deaf* as *Adders*, to *Ambition's* Call:
Too *Free*, for *Pow'r*, (or *Prejudice*) to *win*,
And, *safely* lodging Liberty *within*.

Pardon, *Great Prince!* th' unfashionable strain,
That shuns to *dedicate;* nor seeks to *gain*:
That *(self-resigning)* knows no *narrow* View;
And *but* for *Public* Bleſsings, courts ev'n *You!*

Late a bold *Tracer* of your *measur'd* Mind,
(While, by the mournful *Scene*, to Grief inclin'd,)
I saw your *Eloquence* of *Eyes* confeſs
Soft *Sense* of *Belvidera's* deep Diſtreſs,
Prophetic thence, *fore-deem'd* the riſing Years;
And *hail'd* a *Happy Nation* in *Your Tears!*

Oh!—*nobly* touch'd!—th' inſpiring Pleaſure choose,
Snatch from the *sable Wave*, the ſinking *Muse!*
Charming, *be* charm'd! the *Stage's* Anguiſh heal:
And teach a languid People *how* to feel.

Then her full *Soul* ſhall *Tragic Pow'r impart*,
And reach *Three Kingdoms* in their *Prince's Heart!*
Lightneſs, diſclaim'd, ſhall *bluſh* itſelf *away:*
And reaſ'ning *Senſe resume* forgotten Sway.
Love, Courage, Loyalty, Taſte, Honour, Truth,
Flaſh'd from the *Scene*, re-charm our liſt'ning Youth:
And, *Virtues* (by *Your* Influence *form'd)* ſuſtain
The future Glories of their *Founder's* Reign.
Nor let due Care of a *protected Stage*,
Miſjudg'd *Amuſement*, but *ſpare* Hours engage;
Strong, *ſerious Truths*, the manly *Muſe* diſplays;
And leads charm'd *Reaſon* through thoſe *flow'ry* Ways.
While *Hiſtory's* cold Care but *Facts* inrols,
The *Muſe* (perſuaſive) ſaves the pictur'd *Souls!*
Beyond all *Egypt's Gums*, *embalms* Mankind:
And ſtamps the living Features of the Mind.

Time can eject the Sons of Pow'r, from Fame;
And *He*, who gains a *World*, may *loſe* his Name.
But *cheriſh'd Arts* inſure immortal Breath:
And bid their *prop'd Defenders* tread on Death!

Look back, lov'd Prince! on Ages *ſunk* in *ſhade!*
I *feel*, what *Darkneſs* abſent *Genius* made!

Think on the *dead Fore-fillers* of your *Place!*
Think on the stern *First-founders* of your Race!
And, where *lost Story* sleeps in silent Night;
Charge to their Want of *Taste*, their Want of *Light.*

When, in your rising Grove, (no *Converse* nigh)
Black Edward's awful *Bust* demands your Eye,
Think, from *what Cause* blind Chronicles *defame*
The *gross-told* Tow'rings of that *dreadful* Name!
Search him, through *Fancy;* and *suppose* him shown
By the long Glories *to the Muses known*:
Shining, *disclos'd*:—o'ertrampling *Death's* Controul!
And, *opening, backward,* All his *Depth of Soul!*

Then—breathe a conscious *Sigh* to *mourn* his Fate,
Who *form'd* no *Writers*, like his Spirit *Great!*
To *limn* his living *Thoughts*—past Fame *renew:*
And build *Him Honours* they reserve for *You!*

I am,

With profound Respect,

SIR,

Your Royal Highness's

Most humble,

And obedient Servant,

A. HILL.

PREFACE

TO THE READER.

THE beauties of *Nature* will be beauties *everlastingly.*——If they are, sometimes, *eclipsed* by a cloud of ill accidents, they *disperse* the dark *screen;* and, again, become amiable.

But, unwilling to suppose we are *now* under influence of such a *cloud*, with regard to *dramatical taste*, I thought it more decent (and *juster*) to charge its degeneracy to the *stage*, than to the *genius* of the nation.

Accounting in this manner for the *defect*, I have often taken pleasure, (when turning my search towards a *remedy*) to consider it as no improbable hope, that *young actors* and *actresses*, beginning, *unseduced* by *affected examples*, might go some length towards what has been said of a celebrated writer—

'*Who reach'd* perfection *in his* first essay.'

It required, methought, but the assistance of a lively *imagination*, joined to an easy and natural *power*, with a resolute *habitude*, to *be*, for an hour or two, the very persons they would *seem*.—Such a *foundation* for accomplished acting lies so open, and so clearly *in nature*, that they, who find it at all, *must* discover it at *first:* because, when men are once got *out of the road*, they, who travel the *farthest*, have but most length of way to ride *back* again.

Yet, the interested in playhouses were so positive in the contrary sentiment, that they submitted to reverence, as a *maxim*, this extraordinary conces-

sion, 'That *actors must be twenty years such, before they can expect to be masters of the air and tread of the stage.*'

Now there is but *one* view in nature, wherein I was willing to admit of this argument: I was forced to *confess* I had seen some *particular* stage airs and stage treads, which a man of good sense *might*, indeed, waste a long life in endeavouring to imitate, and *at last lose his labour!*

However, since an opinion in opposition to these gentlemen's wanted weight to make that believed *possible*, which had not yet been reduced into *practice*, I took a sudden resolution actually to try, *who was in the right*, by attempting the *experiment*.—This, I know, was a design, which, succeeding, would not fail to give pleasure to the *public;* and which, *miscarrying*, could produce no worse consequence than *my* particular mortification.

I imagined it reasonable to found a trial of this nature rather on a *new* play than an *old* one; and, as it ought to be a play of unquestionable *merit*, it must have been presumption and vanity to have cast a thought toward any thing *of my own*—upon the whole, that I might keep out of the reach either of prejudice or partiality, a *foreign* production seemed the properest choice, and the *Zaire* of *Monsieur de Voltaire* offered me every thing that nature could do on the part of the *poet:* but I had still something to *wish*, with regard to that *other* part of her influence which depended on the *player*.

I had (of late) among the rest of the town, been deprived of all rational pleasure from the theatre, by a monstrous and unmoving *affectation*, which, choking up the avenues to *passion*, had made *tragedy forbidding* and *horrible!*

I was despairing to see a *correction* of this folly, when I found myself unexpectedly re-animated by the war which the *prompter* has proclaimed, and is now weekly waging, against the *ranters* and *whiners* of the theatre; after having undertaken to reduce the *actor's lost art* into *principles*, with design, by reconciling them to the touching and spirited *medium*, to reform those *wild copies* of

life into some *resemblance* at least of their *originals*.

Thus *confirmed* in my sentiments, I ventured on the *cast* of two *capital* characters into hands *not disabled* by custom and obstinate prejudice from pursuing the *plain tract of nature*.

It was easy to induce *Osman* (as he is a relation of my own, and *but too fond* of the amusement) to make trial *how far* his delight in an art I shall never allow him to *practise*, might enable him to supply *one* part of the proof, that, to *imitate nature*, we must proceed *upon natural principles*.

At the same time it happened that Mrs. Cibber was fortunately inclinable to exert her inimitable talents in *additional* aid of my purpose, with view to *continue* the *practice* of a profeſsion, for which her *person*, her *voice*, the unaffected *sensibility* of her *heart*, (and her *face*, so finely disposed for *assuming* and *expressing* the *passions*) have so naturally qualified her.

And, to give this bold *novelty of design* all its neceſsary furtherance, Mr. Fleetwood, who profeſses the most generous inclinations for *improvement* of his troublesome province, very willingly *concurred* in whatever could, on *his* part, be of use to the *experiment*.

Behold, in this little *detail*, from *what motive* I have taken upon me to throw one of the finest of *French* plays upon the public.—If my expectations are not strangely *deceived*, it will be found, by the *event*, whether our *taste* for *true* tragedy is *declined*, or the true *art* of *acting* is *forgotten*.

From the *first* I can have nothing to conclude, but that my judgment has been *weak* and *mistaken*.

But, if the *last* proves the case, I shall flatter myself, that those persons of quality, from whose *imaginary want of discernment* some people have not *blushed* to *derive* their *dull* qualities, will, in right of their *insulted understanding*, *exact*, for the future, a warm and toilsome exertion of the *strong* and the *natural*, though at the *cost* of the *lazy* and *affected*.

This would awaken, at once, the *reflection* of

many, who have it in their *power* to be moving and natural actors; and, by effectually *convincing* them, that their present opinion is *wrong*, bring them over (for their own and the public advantage) to embrace and succeed by a *new* one.

Such a step towards *reforming* the theatre, would draw on (as a consequence) many of its *nobler* improvements—for, where *emotions* are keenest, the *delight* becomes greatest, and to whatever *most charms* we most closely *adhere*, and encourage it *most actively*.

If, in translating this excellent tragedy, I have regarded in some places the *soul*, and in others the *letter* of the original, *Monsieur de Voltaire*, who has made himself a very capable *judge* both of our *language* and *customs*, will indulge me that latitude; except he should, in observing some *alterations* I have made in his names and his *diction*, forget that their *motives* are to be found in the turn of our national *difference*.

After what I have said of the playhouses, it would be injustice not to *declare*, that I exclude from the censure of speaking or acting *unnaturally*, any one of the persons who have been cast into *Zara*;—and in particular I must say *this* of *two* of them; that Mr. Milward, who is already a very *excellent*, and hourly rising to be an *accomplished* actor, has a voice that both comprehends and expresses *the utmost compass of harmony*;—and Mr. Cibber, discerningly pursued through the numberless *extent* of his *walks*, is an actor of as *unlimited a compass of genius* as ever I saw on the stage, and is *barely* received as he *deserves*, when the town is *most favourable*.

PROLOGUE.

THE *French*, howe'er mercurial they may seem,
Extinguish half their fire, by critic phlegm:
While *English* Writers Nature's Freedom claim,
And warm their scenes with an ungovern'd flame:
'Tis strange that *Nature* never should inspire
A *Racine's* judgment with a *Shakspeare's* fire!

Howe'er to-night—(to promise much we're loth)
But——you've a chance, to have a taste of both.
From *English* plays, *Zara's French* author fir'd,
Confeſs'd his muse beyond herself inspir'd;
From rack'd *Othello's* rage he rais'd his style,
And snatch'd the brand that lights this tragic pile:
Zara's succeſs his utmost hopes outflew,
And a twice twentieth weeping audience drew.

As for our *English* friend, he leaves to you,
Whate'er may seem to his performance due;
No views of gain his hopes or fears engage,
He *gives* a child of leisure to the stage;
Willing to try, if *yet*, forsaken Nature,
Can charm, with any one remember'd feature.

Thus far, the author speaks—but now, the player,
With trembling *Heart*, prefers his humble prayer.
To-night, the greatest venture of my life,
Is lost or sav'd, as *you* receive—a wife:
If time, you think, may ripen her to merit,
With *gentle* smiles, support her wav'ring spirit.

Zara in *France*, at once an actreſs rais'd,
Warm'd into *skill*, by being *kindly prais'd:*
O! could such wonders here from favour flow,
How would our *Zara's* heart with transport glow:
But she, alas! by juster fears oppreſs'd,
Begs but your bare *endurance*, at the best,
Her unskill'd tongue *would* simple *Nature* speak,
Nor dares *her* bounds, for false applauses break.
Amidst a thousand *faults*, her best pretence
To *please*——is unpresuming innocence.
When a chaste heart's distreſs your *grief* demands,
One silent tear outweighs a thousand hands,
If she conveys the pleasing *passions right*,
Guard and *support* her, this decisive night;
If she *mistakes*—or, finds her *strength* too *small*,
Let interposing pity——break her fall.
In you it rests, to save her, or destroy,
If she draws tears from You, I weep—for *Joy*.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Osman, *Sultan of* Jerusalem.
Lusignan, *last of the Blood of the Christian Kings of* Jerusalem.
Nerestan, Chatillon, } French *Officers.*
Orasmin, *Minister to the Sultan.*
Melidor, *an Officer of the Seraglio.*

Zara, Selima, } *Slaves to the Sultan.*

ZARA.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

ZARA *and* SELIMA.

Sel. IT moves my wonder, young and beauteous Zara,
Whence these new sentiments inspire your heart!
Your peace of mind increases with your charms;
Tears now no longer shade your eyes soft lustre:
You meditate no more those happy climes
To which Nerestan will return to guide you.
You talk no more of that gay nation now,
Where men adore their wives, and woman's power
Draws rev'rence from a polish'd people's softneſs:
Their husbands' equals, and their lovers' queens!
Free without scandal; wise without restraint;
"Their virtue due to nature, not to fear."
Why have you ceas'd to wish this happy change?
A barr'd seraglio!—sad, unsocial life!
Scorn'd, and a slave! All this has lost its terror;
And Syria rivals, now, the banks of Seine!

Zar. Joys which we do not know, we do not wish.
My fate's bound in by Sion's sacred wall:
Clos'd from my infancy within this palace,
Custom has learnt, from time, the power to please.
I claim no share in the remoter world,
The sultan's property, his will my law;
Unknowing all but him, his power, his fame;
To live his subject is my only hope,
All else, an empty dream.——

Sel. Have you forgot

Absent Nerestan then? whose gen'rous friendship
So nobly vow'd redemption from your chains!
How oft have you admir'd his dauntleſs soul!
Osman, his conqu'ror, by his courage charm'd,
Trusted his faith, and on his word releas'd him:
Though not return'd in time—we yet expect him.
Nor had his noble journey other motive,
Than to procure our ransom.—And is this,
This dear, warm hope, become an idle dream?

Zar. Since after two long years he not returns,
'Tis plain his promise stretch'd beyond his power.
A stranger and a slave, unknown, like him,
Proposing much, means little;—talks and vows,
Delighted with a prospect of escape:——
He promis'd to redeem ten Christians more,
And free us all from slavery!—I own
I once admir'd the unprofitable zeal,
But now it charms no longer.—

Sel. What if yet,
He, faithful should return, and hold his vow;
Would you not, then——

Zar. No matter—Time is past,
And every thing is chang'd——

Sel. But, whence comes this?

Zar. Go—'twere too much to tell thee Zara's fate:
The sultan's secrets, all, are sacred here:
But my fond heart delights to mix with thine.
Some three months past, when thou, and other slaves,
Were forc'd to quit fair Jordan's flow'ry bank;
Heav'n, to cut short the anguish of my days,
Rais'd me to comfort by a pow'rful hand:
This mighty Osman!——

Sel. What of him?

Zar. This sultan,
This conqueror of the Christians, loves——

Sel. Whom?

Zar. Zara!——
Thou blushest, and, I guess thy thoughts accuse me;
But, know me better——'twas unjust suspicion.
All emperor as he is, I cannot stoop
To honours, that bring shame and baseneſs with 'em:
Reason and pride, those props of modesty,
[illegible]n my guarded heart, and strengthen virtue;
[illegible]r than sink to infamy, let chains

" Embrace me with a joy, such love denies:"
No——I shall now astonish thee;——his greatneſs
Submits to own a pure and honest flame.
Among the shining crowds, which live to please him,
His whole regard is fix'd on me alone:
He offers marriage: and its rites now wait
To crown me empreſs of this eastern world.
Sel. Your virtue and your charms deserve it all:
My heart is not surpris'd'd, but struck to hear it.
If to be empreſs can complete your happineſs,
I rank myself, with joy, among your slaves.
Zar. Be still my equal——and enjoy my bleſsings;
For, thou partaking, they will bleſs me more.
Sel. Alas! but Heaven! will it permit this marriage?
Will not this grandeur, falsely call'd a bliſs,
Plant bitterneſs, and root it in your heart?
Have you forgot you are of Christian blood?
Zar. Ah me! What hast thou said, why wouldst thou thus
Recall my wav'ring thoughts? How know I, what,
Or whence I am? Heaven kept it hid in darkneſs,
Conceal'd me from myself, and from my blood.
Sel. Nerestan, who was born a Christian, here,
Aſserts, that you, like him, had Christian parents;
Besides——that croſs, which, from your infant years
Has been preserv'd, was found upon your bosom,
As if design'd by Heaven, a pledge of faith
Due to the God you purpose to forsake!
Zar. Can my fond heart, on such a feeble proof,
Embrace a faith, abhorr'd by him I love?
I see too plainly custom forms us all;
Our thoughts, our morals, our most fix'd belief,
Are consequences of our place of birth:
Born beyond Ganges, I had been a Pagan,
In France a Christian, I am here a Saracen:
'Tis but instruction, all! Our parents' hand
Writes on our heart the first faint characters,
Which time, re-tracing, deepens into strength,
That nothing can efface, but death or Heaven!—
Thou wer't not made a pris'ner in this place,
Till after reason, borrowing force from years,
Had lent its lustre to enlighten faith:—
For me, who in my cradle was their slave,

Thy Christian doctrines were too lately taught me:
Yet, far from having lost the rev'rence due,
This croſs, as often as it meets my eye,
Strikes through my heart a kind of awful fear!
I honour, from my ſoul, the Christian laws,
Thoſe laws, which, ſoftening nature by humanity,
Melt nations into brotherhood;—no doubt
Christians are happy; and 'tis just to love them.

Sel. Why have you, then, declar'd yourſelf their foe? [man's?
Why will you join your hand with this proud Os-
Who owes his triumph to the Christians' ruin!

Zar. Ah!—who could slight the offer of his heart?
Nay;—for I mean to tell thee all my weakneſs;
Perhaps I had, ere now, profeſs'd thy faith,
But Osman lov'd me—and I've lost it all:—
I think on none but Osman—my pleas'd heart,
Fill'd with the bleſsing, to be lov'd by him,
Wants room for other happineſs. "Place thou
"Before thy eyes, his merit and his fame,
"His youth, yet blooming but in manhood's dawn;
"How many conquer'd kings have swell'd his pow'r?
"Think, too, how lovely! how his brow becomes
"This wreath of early glories!"—Oh, my friend!
I talk not of a sceptre, which he gives me:
No—to be charm'd with that were thanks too hum-
Offensive tribute, and too poor for love! [ble!
'Twas Osman won my heart, not Osman's crown:
I love not in him aught besides himself. [sion:
Thou think'st, perhaps, that these are starts of paſ-
But, had the will of Heav'n leſs bent to bleſs him,
Doom'd Osman to my chains, and me to fill
The throne that Osman sits on—ruin and wretch-
edneſs
Catch and consume my wishes, but I would—
To raise me to myself, descend to him.

"*Sel.* Hark! the wish'd music sounds—'Tis he—
he comes— [*Exit Selima.*

"*Zar.* My heart prevented him, and found him near:
"Absent two whole long days, the slow-pac'd hour
"At last is come, and gives him to my wishes!"
[*A grand March.*

Enter OSMAN, *reading a Paper, which he re-delivers to* ORASMIN; *with Attendants.*

Osm. Wait my return—or, should there be a cause
That may require my presence, do not fear
To enter; ever mindful, that my own
Follows my people's happineſs.—At length,
Cares have releas'd my heart—to love and Zara.
[*Exit Oras. &c.*

Zar. 'Twas not in cruel abſence, to deprive me
Of your imperial image—every where
You reign triumphant: memory ſupplies
Reflection with your power; and you, like Heaven,
Are always preſent—and are always gracious.

Osm. The Sultans, my great ancestors, bequeath'd
Their empire to me, but their taſte they gave not;
Their laws, their lives, their loves, delight not me:
I know our prophet ſmiles on am'rous wiſhes,
And opens a wide field to vaſt deſire;
I know, that at my will I might poſſeſs;
That, waſting tenderneſs in wild profuſion,——
I might look down to my ſurrounded feet,
And bleſs contending beauties. I might ſpeak,
Serenely ſlothful, from within my palace,
And bid my pleaſure be my people's law.
But, ſweet as ſoftneſs is, its end is cruel;
I can look round, and count a hundred kings,
Unconquer'd by themſelves, and ſlaves to others:
Hence was Jeruſalem to Chriſtians loſt;
" But Heaven, to blaſt that unbelieving race,
" Taught me to be a king, by thinking like one."
Hence from the diſtant Euxine to the Nile,
The trumpets voice has wak'd the world to war;
Yet, amidſt arms and death, thy power has reach'd me;
For thou diſdain'ſt, like me, a languid love;
Glory and Zara join—and charm together.

Zar. I hear at once, with bluſhes and with joy,
This paſſion, ſo unlike your country's cuſtoms.

Osm. Paſſion, like mine, diſdains my country's cuſtoms;
The jealouſy, the faintneſs, the diſtruſt,
The proud, ſuperior coldneſs of the eaſt.
I know to love you, Zara, with eſteem;

To trust your virtue, and to court your soul.
Nobly confiding, I unveil my heart,
And dare inform you, that, 'tis all your own;
My joys must all be yours; only my cares
Shall lie conceal'd within—and reach not Zara.

Zar. Oblig'd by this excefs of tenderneſs,
How low, how wretched was the lot of Zara!
Too poor with aught, but thanks, to pay such bleſs-
ings!

Osm. Not so—I love—and would be lov'd again;
Let me confeſs it, I poſſeſs a soul,
That what it wishes, wishes ardently.
I should believe you hated, had you power
To love with moderation: 'tis my aim,
In every thing, to reach supreme perfection.
If, with an equal flame, I touch your heart,
Marriage attends your smile—But know, 'twill make
Me wretched, if it makes not Zara happy.

Zar. Ah, sir! if such a heart as gen'rous Osman's
Can, from my will, submit to take its bliſs,
What mortal ever was decreed so happy!
Pardon the pride, with which I own my joy;
Thus wholly to poſſeſs the man I love!
To know, and to confeſs his will my fate!
To be the happy work of his dear hands!
To be—

Enter ORASMIN.

Osm. Already interrupted! What?
Who?—Whence?

Oras. This moment, sir, there is arriv'd
That Christian slave, who, licens'd on his faith,
Went hence to France—and, now return'd, prays
audience.

Zar. [*Aside.*] Oh, Heaven!

Osm. Admit him—What?—Why comes he not?

Oras. He waits without. No Christian dares ap-
proach
This place, long sacred to the Sultan's privacies.

Osm. Go—bring him with thee—monarchs, like
the sun,
Shine but in vain, unwarming, if unseen;
[illegible] forms and rev'rence, let the great approach us;
[illegible]e unhappy;—every place alike,

Gives the distreſs'd a privilege to enter.——
[*Exit Oras.*
I think with horror on these dreadful maxims,
Which harden kings insensibly to tyrants.

Re-enter ORASMIN *with* NERESTAN.

Ner. Imperial Sultan! honour'd, ev'n by foes!
See me return'd, regardful of my vow,
And punctual to discharge a Christian's duty.
I bring the ransom of the captive Zara,
Fair Selima, the partner of her fortune,
And of ten Christian captives, pris'ners here.
You promis'd, Sultan, if I should return,
To grant their rated liberty :—Behold,
I am return'd, and they are yours no more.
I would have stretch'd my purpose to myself,
But fortune has deny'd it;—my poor all
Suffic'd no further, and a noble poverty
Is now my whole poſseſsion.—I redeem
The promis'd Christians; for I taught 'em hope:
But, for myself, I come again your slave,
To wait the fuller hand of future charity. [me?
Osm. Christian! I must confeſs thy courage charms
But let thy pride be taught, it treads too high,
When it presumes to climb above my mercy.
Go ransomleſs thyself, and carry back
Their unaccepted ransoms, join'd with gifts,
Fit to reward thy purpose; instead of ten,
Demand a hundred Christians; they are thine:
Take 'em, and bid 'em teach their haughty country,
They left some virtue among Saracens.—
Be Lusignan alone excepted—He
Who boasts the blood of kings, and dares lay claim
To my Jerusalem—that claim, his guilt!
" Such is the law of states; had I been vanquish'd,
" Thus had he said of me." I mourn his lot,
Who must in fetters, lost to day-light, pine,
And sigh away old age in grief and pain.
For Zara—but to name her as a captive,
Were to dishonour language;—she's a prize
Above thy purchase:—all the Christian realms,
With all their kings to guide 'em, would unite
In vain, to force her from me—Go, retire—

Ner. For Zara's ransom, with her own consent,
I had your royal word. For Lusignan—
Unhappy, poor, old man——
Osm. Was I not heard?
Have I not told thee, Christian, all my will?
What if I prais'd thee!—This presumptuous virtue,
Compelling my esteem, provokes my pride;
Be gone—and when to-morrow's sun shall rise
On my dominions, be not found—too near me.
[*Exit Nerestan.*
Zar. [*Aside.*] Assist him, Heaven!
Osm. Zara, retire a moment—
Assume, throughout my palace, sovereign empire,
While I give orders to prepare the pomp
That waits to crown thee mistress of my throne.
[*Leads her out, and returns.*
Orasmin! didst thou mark th' imperious slave?
What could he mean?—he sigh'd—and, as he went,
Turn'd and look'd back at Zara!—didst thou mark it?
Oras. Alas! my sovereign master! let not jealousy
Strike high enough to reach your noble heart.
Osm. Jealousy, said'st thou? I disdain it:—No!
Distrust is poor; and a misplac'd suspicion
Invites and justifies the falsehood fear'd.—
Yet, as I love with warmth—so, I could hate!
But Zara is above disguise and art:——
"My love is stronger, nobler, than my power."
Jealous!—I was not jealous!—If I was,
I am not—no—my heart—but, let us drown
Remembrance of the word, and of the image:
My heart is fill'd with a diviner flame.—
Go, and prepare for the approaching nuptials,
"Zara to careful empire joins delight."
I must allot one hour to thoughts of state,
Then, all the smiling day is love and Zara's.
[*Exit Orasmin.*
Monarchs, by forms of pompous misery press'd,
In proud, unsocial misery, unbless'd,
Would, but for love's soft influence, curse their throne,
And, among crowded millions, live alone. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

NERESTAN, CHATILLON.

Chat. Matchleſs Nerestan! generous and great!
You, who have broke the chains of hopeleſs slaves!
" You, Christian saviour! by a Saviour sent!"
Appear, be known, enjoy your due delight;
The grateful weepers wait to clasp your knees,
They throng to kiſs the happy hand that sav'd 'em:
Indulge the kind impatience of their eyes,
And, at their head, command their hearts for ever.
Ner. Illustrious Chatillon! this praise o'erwhelms me;
What have I done beyond a Christian's duty;
Beyond what you would, in my place, have done?
Chat. True—it is every honest Christian's duty;
Nay, 'tis the bleſsing of such minds as ours,
For others' good to sacrifice our own.—
Yet, happy they, to whom Heav'n grants the power,
To execute, like you, that duty's call!
For us—the relics of abandon'd war,
Forgot in France, and, in Jerusalem,
Left to grow old in fetters,—Osman's father
Consign'd us to the gloom of a damp dungeon,
Where, but for you, we must have groan'd out life,
And native France have bleſs'd our eyes no more.
Ner. The will of gracious Heav'n, that soften'd Osman,
Inspir'd me for your sakes:—But, with our joy,
Flows, mix'd, a bitter sadneſs—I had hop'd
To save from their perversion, a young beauty,
Who, in her infant innocence, with me,
Was made a slave by cruel Noradin;
When, sprinkling Syria with the blood of Christians,
Cæsarea's walls saw Lusignan surpris'd,
And the proud crescent rise in bloody triumph.
From this seraglio having young escap'd,
Fate, three years since, restor'd me to my chai-
Then, sent to Paris on my plighted faith,

I flatter'd my fond hope with vain resolves,
To guide the lovely Zara to that court
Where Lewis has establish'd virtue's throne:
But Osman will detain her—yet, not Osman;
Zara herself forgets she is a Christian,
And loves the tyrant Sultan!—Let that pass:
I mourn a disappointment still more cruel;
The prop of all our Christian hope is lost!

Chat. Dispose me at your will—I am your own.

Ner. Oh, sir, great Lusignan, so long their cap-
That last of an heroic race of kings! [tive,
That warrior, whose past fame has fill'd the world!
Osman refuses to my sighs for ever!

Chat. Nay, then we have been all redeem'd in vain;
Perish that soldier who would quit his chains,
And leave his noble chief behind in fetters.
Alas! you know him not as I have known him;
Thank Heav'n, that plac'd your birth so far remov'd
From those detested days of blood and woe:
But I, less happy, was condemn'd to see
Thy walls, Jerusalem, beat down—and all
Our pious fathers' labours lost in ruins!
Heav'n! had you seen the very temple rifled!
The sacred sepulchre itself profan'd!
Fathers with children mingled, flame together!
And our last king, oppress'd with age and arms,
Murder'd, and bleeding o'er his murder'd sons!
Then Lusignan, sole remnant of his race,
Rallying our fated few amidst the flames,
Fearless, beneath the crush of falling towers,
The conqu'rors and the conquer'd, groans and death!
Dreadful—and, waving in his hand his sword,
Red with the blood of infidels, cry'd out,
This way, ye faithful Christians! follow me.——

Ner. How full of glory was that brave retreat!

Chat. 'Twas Heav'n, no doubt, that sav'd and led him on;
Pointed his path, and march'd our guardian guide:
We reach'd Cæsarea—there the general voice
Chose Lusignan, thenceforth to give us laws;
Alas! 'twas vain—Cæsarea could not stand
[illegible] self was fallen!—we were betray'd;
[illegible]signan condemn'd, to length of life,

In chains, in damps, and darkneſs, and despair:
" Yet great, amidst his miseries, he look'd,
" As if he could not feel his fate himself,
" But as it reach'd his followers. And shall we,
" For whom our gen'rous leader suffer'd this,
" Be vilely safe, and dare be bleſs'd without him?"
Ner. Oh! I should hate the liberty he shar'd not.
I knew too well the miseries you describe,
For I was born amidst them. Chains and death,
Cæsarea lost, and Saracens triumphant,
Were the first objects which my eyes e'er look'd on.
Hurried, an infant, among other infants,
Snatch'd from the bosoms of their bleeding mothers,
A temple sav'd us, till the slaughter ceas'd;
Then were we sent to this ill-fated city,
Here, in the palace of our former kings,
To learn, from Saracens, their hated faith,
And be completely wretched.——Zara, too,
Shar'd this captivity; we both grew up
So near each other, that a tender friendship
Endear'd her to my wishes: my fond heart—
Pardon its weakneſs, bleeds to see her lost,
And, for a barb'rous tyrant, quit her God!
Chat. Such is the Saracens', too fatal, policy!
Watchful seducers, still, of infant weakneſs:
" Happy that you so young escap'd their hands!"
But let us think——May not this Zara's int'rest,
Loving the Sultan, and by him belov'd,
For Lusignan procure some softer sentence?
" The wise and just, with innocence, may draw
" Their own advantage from the guilt of others."
Ner. How shall I gain admiſsion to her presence?
Osman has banish'd me—but that's a trifle;
Will the seraglio's portals open to me?
Or, could I find that easy to my hopes,
What prospect of succeſs from an apostate?
On whom I cannot look without disdain;
" And who will read her shame upon my brow."
The hardest trial of a generous mind
Is, to court favours from a hand it scorns.
Chat. Think it is Lusignan we seek to serve.
Ner. Well—it shall be attempted—Hark! who's this?
Are my eyes false; or, is it really she?

Enter ZARA.

Zar. Start not, my worthy friend! I come to seek you;
The Sultan has permitted it; fear nothing:——
But to confirm my heart which trembles near you,
Soften that angry air, nor look reproach;
Why should we fear each other, both mistaking?
Aſsociates from our birth, one prison held us,
One friendship taught affliction to be calm,
Till Heav'n thought fit to favour your escape,
And call you to the fields of happier France;
Thence, once again, it was my lot to find you
A pris'ner here; where, hid amongst a crowd
Of undistinguish'd slaves, with leſs restraint,
I shar'd your frequent converse;———
It pleas'd your pity, shall I say your friendship?
Or rather, shall I call it generous charity?
To form that noble purpose, to redeem
Distreſsful Zara—you procur'd my ransom,
And with a greatneſs that out-soar'd a crown,
Return'd yourself a slave, to give me freedom;
But Heav'n has cast our fate for different climes:
Here, in Jerusalem, I fix for ever;
Yet, among all the shine that marks my fortune,
I shall with frequent tears remember yours;
Your goodneſs will for ever sooth my heart,
And keep your image still a dweller there:
Warm'd by your great example to protect
That faith, that lifts humanity so high,
I'll be a mother to distreſsful Christians.

Ner. How!—You protect the Christians! you, who can
Abjure their saving truth, and coldly see
Great Lusignan, their chief, die slow in chains!

Zar. To bring him freedom you behold me here;
You will this moment meet his eyes in joy.

Chat. Shall I then live to bleſs that happy hour?

Ner. Can Christians owe so dear a gift to Zara?

Zar. Hopeleſs I gathered courage to intreat
The Sultan for his liberty—amaz'd,
So soon to gain the happineſs I wish'd!
ee where they bring the good old chief grown dim
ith age, by pain and sorrows hasten'd on!

Chat. How is my heart diſsolv'd with sudden joy!
" *Zar.* I long to view his venerable face,
" But tears, I know not why, eclipse my sight.
" I feel, methinks, redoubled pity for him;
" But, I, alas! myself have been a slave;
" And when we pity woes which we have felt,
" 'Tis but a partial virtue!
" *Ner.* Amazement!—Whence this greatneſs in an infidel!"

Enter LUSIGNAN *led in by Two Guards.*

Lus. Where am I? From the dungeon's depth what voice
Has call'd me to revisit long-lost day?
Am I with Christians?—I am weak—forgive me,
And guide my trembling steps. I'm full of years;
My miseries have worn me more than age.
Am I in truth at liberty? [*Seating himself.*
Chat. You are;
And every Christian's grief takes end with yours.
Lus. O, light! O, dearer far than light, that voice!
Chatillon, is it you? my fellow martyr!
And shall our wretchedneſs, indeed, have end?
In what place are we now!—my feeble eyes,
Diſus'd to day-light, long in vain to find you.
Chat. This was the palace of your royal fathers:
'Tis now the son of Noradin's seraglio.
Zar. The master of this place—the mighty Osman,
Distinguiſhes, and loves to cherish virtue.
This gen'rous Frenchman, yet a stranger to you,
Drawn from his native soil, from peace and rest,
Brought the vow'd ransoms of ten Christian slaves,
Himself contented to remain a captive:
But Osman, charm'd by greatneſs like his own,
To equal what he lov'd, has giv'n him you.
Lus. So gen'rous France inspires her social sons!
They have been ever dear and useful to me—
Would I were nearer to him——Noble sir,
[*Nerestan approaches.*
How have I merited, that you for me
Should paſs such distant seas, to bring me bleſsings,
And hazard your own safety for my sake?
Ner. My name, sir, is Nerestan; born in Syria
I wore the chains of slavery from my birth;

Till quitting the proud crescent for the court
Where warlike Lewis reigns, beneath his eye
I learnt the trade of arms:—the rank I held
Was but the kind distinction which he gave me,
To tempt my courage to deserve regard.
Your sight, unhappy prince, would charm his eye;
That best and greatest monarch will behold
With grief and joy those venerable wounds,
And print embraces where your fetters bound you.
All Paris will revere the croſs's martyr;
" Paris, the refuge still of ruin'd kings!"

Lus. Alas! in times long past, I've seen its glory:
When Philip the victorious liv'd, I fought
A-breast with Montmorency and Melun,
D'Estaing, De Neile, and the far-famous Courcy;—
Names which were then the praise and dread of war!
But what have I to do at Paris now?
I stand upon the brink of the cold grave;
That way my journey lies—to find, I hope,
The King of Kings, and ask the recompence
For all my woes, long-suffer'd for his sake——
You gen'rous witneſses of my last hour,
While I yet live, aſsist my humble prayers,
And join the resignation of my soul.
Nerestan! Chatillon!—and you, fair mourner!
Whose tears do honour to an old man's sorrows!
Pity a father, the unhappiest sure
That ever felt the hand of angry heaven!
My eyes, though dying, still can furnish tears;
Half my long life they flow'd, and still will flow!
A daughter and three sons, my heart's proud hopes,
Were all torn from me in their tend'rest years—
My friend Chatillon knows, and can remember—

Chat. Would I were able to forget your woe.

Lus. Thou wert a pris'ner with me in Cæsarea,
And there beheld'st my wife and two dear sons
Perish in flames.

Chat. A captive and in fetters,
I could not help 'em.

Lus. I know thou could'st not—
Oh, 'twas a dreadful scene! these eyes beheld it—.
Husband and father, helpleſs I beheld it.—
"d the mournful privilege to die!
poor children! whom I now deplore;

If ye are saints in Heav'n, as sure ye are,
Look with an eye of pity on that brother,
That sister whom you left!—If I have yet,
Or son or daughter:—for in early chains,
Far from their lost and unaſsisting father,
I heard that they were sent, with numbers more,
To this seraglio; hence to be dispers'd
In nameleſs remnants o'er the east, and spread
Our Christian miseries round a faithleſs world.

Chat. 'Twas true,—For in the horrors of that day,
I snatch'd your infant daughter from her cradle;
" But finding ev'ry hope of flight was vain,
" Scarce had I sprinkled, from a public fountain,
" Those sacred drops which wash the soul from sin,"
When from my bleeding arms, fierce Saracens
Forc'd the lost innocent, who smiling lay,
And pointed, playful, at the swarthy spoilers!
With her, your youngest, then your only son,
Whose little life had reach'd the fourth sad year,
And just giv'n sense to feel his own misfortunes,
Was order'd to this city.

Ner. I, too, hither,
Just at that fatal age, from lost Cæsarea,
Came in that crowd of undistinguish'd Christians.—

Lus. You!—came you thence?—Alas! who knows but you
Might heretofore have seen my two poor children.
[*Looking up.*] Hah, madam! that small ornament you wear,
Its form a stranger to this country's fashion,
How long has it been yours?

Zar. From my first birth, sir—
Ah, what! you seem surpris'd!—why should this move you?

Lus. Would you confide it to my trembling hands?

Zar. To what new wonders am I now reserv'd?
Oh, sir! what mean you?

Lus. Providence and Heaven!
Oh, failing eyes, deceive ye not my hope?
Can this be poſsible?—Yes, yes—'tis she!
This little croſs—I know it, by sure marks!
Oh! take me, Heav'n! while I can die with joy—

Zar. Oh, do not, sir, distract me!—rising thoughts
And hopes, and fears, o'erwhelm me!

Lus. Tell me, yet,
Has it remain'd for ever in your hands?
What—both brought captives from Cæsarea hither?
Zar. Both, both—
"Oh, heaven! have I then found a father?"
Lus. Their voice! their looks!
The living images of their dear mother! [thoughts,
O God! who see'st my tears, and know'st my
Do not forsake me at this dawn of hope——
Strengthen my heart, too feeble for this joy.
Madam! Nerestan!—Help me, Chatillon!
[*Rising.*
Nerestan, hast thou on thy breast a scar,
Which ere Cæsarea fell, from a fierce hand,
Surprising us by night, my child receiv'd?
Ner. Bleſs'd hand!—I bear it,—sir, the mark is there!
Lus. Merciful heaven!
Ner. [*Kneeling.*] Oh, sir!—Oh, Zara, kneel.——
Zar. [*Kneeling.*] My father!—Oh!——
Lus. Oh, my lost children?
Both. Oh! [you,
Lus. My son! my daughter! lost in embracing
I would now die, lest this should prove a dream.
Chat. How touch'd is my glad heart, to see their joy!
Lus. They shall not tear you from my arms—my children!
Again, I find you—dear in wretchedneſs:
Oh, my brave son—and thou, my nameleſs daughter!
Now diſsipate all doubt, remove all dread,
Has Heaven, that gives me back my children—giv'n 'em,
Such as I lost 'em?—Come they Christians to me?
One weeps and one declines a conscious eye!
Your silence speaks—too well I understand it.
Zar. I cannot, sir, deceive you—Osman's laws
Were mine—and Osman is not Christian.——
Lus. Her words are thunder bursting on my head;
Wert not for thee, my son, I now should die;
Full sixty years I fought the Christians' cause,
Saw their doom'd temple fall, their pow'r destroy'd:
Twenty, a captive, in a dungeon's depth,
I never for myself my tears sought Heaven;

All for my children rose my fruitless prayers:
Yet, what avails a father's wretched joy?
I have a daughter gain'd, and Heav'n an enemy.
Oh, my misguided daughter—lose not thy faith,
Reclaim thy birthright—think upon the blood
Of twenty Christian kings, that fills thy veins;
'Tis heroes' blood—the blood of saints and martyrs!
What would thy mother feel, to see thee thus!
She, and thy murder'd brothers!—think, they call thee?
Think that thou seest 'em stretch their bloody arms,
And weep to win thee from their murd'rer's bosom.
Ev'n in the place where thou betray'st thy God,
He dy'd, my child, to save thee.—" Turn thy eyes,
" And see; for thou art near his sacred sepulchre;
" Thou canst not move a step, but where he trod!"
Thou tremblest—Oh! admit me to thy soul;
Kill not thy aged, thy afflicted father;
" Take not thus soon, again, the life thou gav'st him."
Shame not thy mother—nor renounce thy God.—
'Tis past—Repentance dawns in thy sweet eyes;
I see bright truth descending to thy heart,
And now, my long-lost child is found for ever.
" *Ner.* Oh, doubly blest! a sister, and a soul,
" To be redeem'd together!"
Zar. Oh, my father!
Dear author of my life! inform me, teach me,
What should my duty do?
Lus. By one short word,
To dry up all my tears, and make life welcome,
Say thou art a Christian——
Zar. Sir—I am a Christian.
Lus. Receive her, gracious Heaven! and bless her for it.

Enter ORASMIN.

Oras. Madam, the Sultan order'd me to tell you,
That he expects you instant quit this place,
And bid your last farewell to these vile Christians.
You, captive Frenchmen, follow me; for you,
It is my task to answer.——
Chat. Still new miseries!
How cautious man should be, to say, I'm happy!

Lus. These are the times, my friends, to try our firmneſs,
Our Christian firmneſs.——
Zar. Alas, sir! Oh!
Lus. Oh, you!—I dare not name you!
Farewell—but, come what may, be sure remember
You keep the fatal secret! for the rest,
Leave all to Heaven——be faithful, and be blest.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

OSMAN *and* ORASMIN,

Osm. Orasmin, this alarm was false and groundleſs;
Lewis no longer turns his arms on me;
The French, grown weary by a length of woes,
Wish not at once to quit their fruitful plains,
And famish on Arabia's desert sands.
Their ships, 'tis true, have spread the Syrian seas:
And Lewis, hovering o'er the coast of Cyprus,
Alarms the fears of Asia—But I've learnt,
That steering wide from our unmenac'd ports,
He points his thunder at th' Egyptian shore.
There let him war, and waste my enemies;
Their mutual conflict will but fix my throne.——
Release those Christians—I restore their freedom;
'Twill please their master, nor can weaken me:
Transport 'em at my cost, to find their king;
I wish to have him know me: carry thither
This Lusignan, whom, tell him, I restore,
Because I cannot fear his fame in arms;
But love him for his virtue and his blood.
Tell him, my father, having conquer'd twice,
Condemn'd him to perpetual chains; but I
Have set him free, that I might triumph more.
The Christians gain an army in his name.
I cannot fear a sound.—

Oras. But, sir——should Lewis——

Osm. Tell Lewis and the world—it shall be so:
Zara propos'd it, and my heart approves:
Thy statesman's reason is too dull for love!
" Why wilt thou force me to confess it all?
" Though I to Lewis send back Lusignan,
" I give him but to Zara—I have griev'd her;
" And ow'd her the atonement of this joy.
" Thy false advices, which but now misled
" My anger, to confine those helpless Christians,
" Gave her a pain; I feel for her and me:"
But I talk on, and waste the smiling moments.
For one long hour I yet defer my nuptials;
" But, 'tis not lost, that hour! 'twill be all hers!"
She would employ it in a conference [Christian!
With that Nerestan, whom thou know'st——that

Oras. And have you, sir, indulged that strange desire? [together;

Osm. What mean'st thou? They were infant slaves
Friends should part kind, who are to meet no more.
When Zara asks, I will refuse her nothing:
Restraint was never made for those we love.
Down with those rigours of the proud seraglio;
I hate its laws—where blind austerity
Sinks virtue to necessity.—My blood
Disclaims your Asian jealousy; I hold
The fierce, free plainness of my Scythian ancestors,
Their open confidence, their honest hate,
Their love unfearing, and their anger told.
Go—the good Christian waits—conduct him to her;
Zara expects thee—What she wills, obey.
[*Exit Osman.*

Oras. Ho! Christian! enter——wait a moment here.

Enter NERESTAN.

Zara will soon approach—I go to find her.
[*Exit Oras.*

Ner. In what a state, in what a place, I leave her?
Oh, faith! Oh, father! Oh, my poor lost sister!
She's here——

Enter ZARA.

Thank Heaven, it is not, then, unlawful

To see you, yet once more, my lovely sister!
Not all so happy!——We, who met but now,
Shall never meet again——for Lusignan——
We shall be orphans still, and want a father.
Zar. Forbid it Heaven!
Ner. His last sad hour's at hand——
That flow of joy, which follow'd our discovery,
Too strong and sudden for his age's weakneſs,
Wasting his spirits, dry'd the source of life,
And nature yields him up to time's demand.
Shall he not die in peace?—Oh! let no doubt
Disturb his parting moments with distrust;
Let me, when I return to close his eyes,
Compose his mind's impatience too, and tell him,
You are confirm'd a Christian!
Zar. Oh! may his soul enjoy, in earth and heaven,
Eternal rest! nor let one thought, one sigh,
One bold complaint of mine recall his cares!
But you have injur'd me, who still can doubt.——
What! am I not your sister? and shall you
Refuse me credit? You suppose me light;
You, who should judge my honour by your own,
Shall you distrust a truth I dar'd avow,
And stamp apostate on a sister's heart!
Ner. Ah! do not misconceive me!—if I err'd,
Affection, not distrust, misled my fear;
Your will may be a Christian, yet, not you;
There is a sacred mark—a sign of faith,
A pledge of promise, that must firm your claim;
Wash you from guilt, and open Heaven before you.
Swear, swear by all the woes we all have borne,
By all the martyr'd saints who call you daughter,
That you consent, this day, to seal our faith,
By that mysterious rite which waits your call.
Zar. I swear by Heaven, and all its holy host,
Its saints, its martyrs, its attesting angels,
And the dread presence of its living author,
To have no faith but yours;—to die a Christian!
Now, tell me what this mystic faith requires.
Ner. To hate the happineſs of Osman's throne,
And love that God, who, through his maze of woes,
Has brought us all, unhoping, thus together.
[me——I am a soldier, uninstructed,

Nor daring to instruct, though strong in faith:
But I will bring th' ambaſsador of Heaven,
To clear your views, and lift you to your God!
Be it your task to gain admiſsion for him.——
But where? from whom?—Oh! thou immortal Power!
Whence can we hope it, in this curs'd seraglio?
Who is this slave of Osman? Yes, this slave!
Does she not boast the blood of twenty kings?
Is not her race the same with that of Lewis?
Is she not Lusignan's unhappy daughter?
A Christian, and my sister?—yet a slave!
A willing slave!—I dare not speak more plainly.

Zar. Cruel! go on—Alas! you do not know me!
At once, a stranger to my secret fate,
My pains, my fears, my wishes, and my power:
I am—I will be Christian—will receive
This holy priest, with his mysterious bleſsing;
I will not do nor suffer aught unworthy
Myself, my father, or my father's race.——
But, tell me—— nor be tender on this point,—
What punishment your Christian laws decree,
For an unhappy wretch, who, to herself
Unknown, and all abandon'd by the world,
Lost and enslav'd, has, in her sov'reign master,
Found a protector, generous as great,
Has touch'd his heart, and giv'n him all her own?

Ner. The punishment of such a slave should be
Death in this world——and pain in that to come.

Zar. I am that slave—strike here—and save my shame.

Ner. Destruction to my hopes!—Can it be you?

Zar. It is—Ador'd by Osman, I adore him:
This hour the nuptial rites will make us one.

Ner. What! marry Osman!—Let the world grow dark,
That the extinguish'd sun may hide thy shame!
Could it be thus, it were no crime to kill thee.

Zar. Strike, strike—I love him—yes, by Heav'n, I love him.

Ner. Death is thy due—but not thy due from me:
Yet, were the honour of our house no bar——
My father's fame, and the too gentle laws
Of that religion which thou hast disgrac'd——

Did not the God thou quitt'st hold back my arm——
Not there—I could not there—but, by my soul,
I would rush, desp'rate, to the Sultan's breast,
And plunge my sword in his proud heart who damns thee.
Oh! shame! shame! shame! at such a time as this!
When Lewis! that awak'ner of the world,
Beneath the lifted cross makes Egypt pale,
And draws the sword of Heaven to spread our faith!
Now to submit to see my sister doom'd
A bosom slave to him whose tyrant heart
But measures glory by the Christian's woe.
Yes—I will dare acquaint our father with it;
Departing Lusignan may live so long,
As just to hear thy shame, and die to 'scape it.

Zar. Stay—my too angry brother—stay—perhaps,
Zara has resolution great as thine:
'Tis cruel—and unkind!—Thy words are crimes;
My weakness but misfortune! Dost thou suffer;
I suffer more;—Oh! would to Heaven this blood
Of twenty boasted kings would stop at once,
And stagnate in my heart!—It then no more
Would rush in boiling fevers through my veins,
And every trembling drop be fill'd with Osman.
How has he lov'd me! how has he oblig'd me!
I owe thee to him! What has he not done,
To justify his boundless pow'r of charming?
For me, he softens the severe decrees
Of his own faith;—and is it just that mine
Should bid me hate him, but because he loves me?
No——I will be a Christian——but preserve
My gratitude as sacred as my faith;
If I have death to fear for Osman's sake,
It must be from his coldness, not his love.

Ner. I must at once condemn and pity thee;
"I cannot point thee out which way to go,
"But Providence will lend its light to guide thee.
"That sacred rite which thou shalt now receive,
"Will strengthen and support thy feeble heart,
"To live an innocent, or die a martyr:"
Here, then, begin performance of thy vow;
Here, in the trembling horrors of thy soul,
Promise thy king, thy father, and thy God,
Qt to accomplish these detested nuptials,

Till first the rev'rend priest has clear'd your eyes,
Taught you to know, and giv'n you claim to Heav'n.
Promise me this———

Zar. So, bleſs me, Heav'n! I do.——
Go—haſten the good priest, I will expect him;
But first return—cheer my expiring father,
Tell him I am, and will be all he wishes me:
Tell him, to give him life 'twere joy to die.

Ner. I go—Farewell—farewell, unhappy sister!
[*Exit Nerestan.*

Zar. I am alone—and now be just, my heart!
And tell me, wilt thou dare betray thy God?
What am I? What am I about to be?
Daughter of Lusignan—or wife to Osman?
Am I a lover most, or most a Christian?
" Would Selima were come! and yet 'tis just,
" All friends should fly her who forsakes herself."
What shall I do?—What heart has strength to bear
These double weights of duty?—Help me, Heav'n!
To thy hard laws I render up my soul:
But, oh! demand it back—for now 'tis Osman's.

Enter OSMAN.

Osm. Shine out, appear, be found, my lovely Zara!
Impatient eyes attend—the rites expect thee;
And my devoted heart no longer brooks
This distance from its soft'ner!—" all the lamps
" Of nuptial love are lighted, and burn pure,
" As if they drew their brightneſs from thy blushes:
" The holy mosque is fill'd with fragrant fumes,
" Which emulate the sweetneſs of thy breathing:
" My prostrate people all confirm my choice,
" And send their souls to heaven in prayers for bleſsings.
" Thy envious rivals, conscious of thy right,
" Approve superior charms, and join to praise thee;
" The throne that waits thee, seems to shine more richly,
" As all its gems, with animated lustre,
" Fear'd to look dim beneath the eyes of Zara!"
Come, my slow love! the ceremonies wait thee;
Come, and begin from this dear hour my triumph.

Zar. Oh, what a wretch am I! Oh, grief! Oh, love!
" *Osm.* Come——come——
" *Zar.* Where shall I hide my blushes?
" *Osm.* Blushes——here, in my bosom, hide 'em.
" *Zar.* My lord!"
Osm. Nay, Zara—give me thy hand, and come——
Zar. Instruct me, Heaven!
What I should say—Alas! I cannot speak.
Osm. Away——this modest, sweet reluctant trifling
But doubles my desires, and thy own beauties.
Zar. Ah, me!
Osm. Nay—but thou should'st not be too cruel.
Zar. I can no longer bear it—Oh, my lord—
Osm. Ha!—" What?—whence?—how?"——
Zar. My lord! my sov'reign!
Heav'n knows this marriage would have been a bliſs
Above my humble hopes!—yet, witneſs love!
Not from the grandeur of your throne that bliſs,
But from the pride of calling Osman mine.
" Would you had been no emperor! and I
" Poſſeſs'd of power and charms deserving you!
" That, 'ighting Asia's thrones, I might alone
" Have left a proffer'd world, to follow you
" Through deserts uninhabited by men,
" And bleſs'd with ample room for peace and love:"
But, as it is——these Christians——
Osm. Christians! What!
How start two images into thy thoughts,
So distant——as the Christians and my love!
Zar. That good old Christian, rev'rend Lusignan,
Now dying, ends his life and woes together.
Osm. Well! let him die—What has thy heart to feel,
Thus preſsing, and thus tender, from the death
Of an old wretched Christian?—Thank our prophet,
Thou art no Christian!—Educated here,
Thy happy youth was tanght our better faith:
Sweet as thy pity shines, 'tis now mis-tim'd.
'! though an aged ſuff'rer dies unhappy,
ould his foreign fate disturb our joys?

Zar. Sir, if you love me, and would have me think
That I am truly dear——
Osm. Heaven! if I love!
Zar. Permit me——
Osm. What?
Zar. To desire——
Osm. Speak out.
Zar. The nuptial rites
May be deferr'd till——
Osm. What! Is that the voice
Of Zara?
Zar. Oh, I cannot bear his frown!
Osm. Of Zara!
Zar. It is dreadful to my heart,
To give you but a seeming cause for anger;
Pardon my grief——Alas! I cannot bear it;
There is a painful terror in your eye
That pierces to my soul——hid from your sight
I go to make a moment's truce with tears,
And gather force to speak of my despair.
[*Exit disordered.*
Osm. I stand immoveable, like senseleſs marble;
Horror had frozen my suspended tongue;
And an astonish'd silence robb'd my will
Of power to tell her that she shock'd my soul!
Spoke she to me?—Sure I misunderstood her!
Cou'd it be me she left?—What have I seen!

Enter ORASMIN.

Orasmin, what a change is here!—She's gone,
And I permitted it, I know not how.
Oras. Perhaps you but accuse the charming fault
Of innocence, too modest oft in love.
Osm. But why, and whence those tears?—those looks! that flight!
That grief, so strongly stamp'd on every feature?
If it has been that Frenchman!—What a thought!
How low, how horrid a suspicion that!
" The dreadful flash at once gives light and kills me;
" My too bold confidence repell'd my caution—
" An infidel! a slave!—a heart like mine
" Reduc'd to suffer from so vile a rival!"
But tell me, did'st thou mark 'em at their parting?

Did'st thou observe the language of their eyes?
Hide nothing from me——Is my love betray'd?
Tell me my whole disgrace: nay, if thou tremblest,
I hear thy pity speak, though thou art silent.

Oras. I tremble at the pangs I see you suffer.
Let not your angry apprehension urge
Your faithful slave to irritate your anguish;
I did, 'tis true, observe some parting tears;
But they were tears of charity and grief:
I cannot think there was a cause deserving
This agony of paſsion——

Osm. Why no——I thank thee——
Orasmin, thou art wise! It cou'd not be
That I should stand expos'd to such an insult.
Thou know'st, had Zara meant me the offence,
She wants not wisdom to have hid it better:
How rightly didst thou judge!—Zara shall know it,
And thank thy honest service——After all,
Might she not have some cause for tears, which I
Claim no concern in—but the grief it gives her?
What an unlikely fear—from a poor slave,
Who goes to-morrow, and, no doubt, who wishes,
Nay, who resolves to see these climes no more.

Oras. Why did you, sir, against our country's custom,
Indulge him with a second leave to come?
He said, he should return once more to see her.

Osm. Return! the traitor! he return!—Dares he
Presume to preſs a second interview?
Would he be seen again?——He shall be seen;
But dead.——I'll punish the audacious slave,
To teach the faithleſs fair to feel my anger.
Be still, my transports; violence is blind:
I know my heart at once is fierce and weak;
" I feel that I descend below myself;
" Zara can never justly be suspected;
" Her sweetneſs was not formed to cover treason:
" Yet, Osman must not stoop to woman's follies;
" Their tears, complaints, regrets, and reconcilements,
" With all their light, capricious roll of changes,
" Are arts too vulgar to be tried on me.
" It would become me better to resume
The empire of my will." Rather than fall

Beneath myself, I must, how dear soe'er
It costs me, rise—till I look down on *Zara*!——
Away——but mark me——these seraglio doors,
Against all Christians be they henceforth shut,
Close as the dark retreats of silent death.
[*Exit Orasmin.*
What have I done, just Heav'n! thy rage to move,
That thou shouldst sink me down, so low to love?
[*Exit.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

ZARA, SELIMA.

Sel. Ah, madam! how at once I grieve your fate,
And how admire your virtue!—Heaven permits,
And Heaven will give you strength, to bear misfortune;
To break these chains, so strong and yet so dear.
Zar. Oh, that I could support the fatal struggle!
Sel. Th' Eternal aids your weakneſs, sees your will,
Directs your purpose, and rewards your sorrows.
Zar. Never had wretch more cause to hope he does.
Sel. What! though you here no more behold your father!
There is a father to be found above,
Who can restore that father to his daughter.
Zar. But I have planted pain in Osman's bosom;
He loves me, even to death! and I reward him
With anguish and despair.—How base! how cruel!
But I deserv'd him not; I should have been
Too happy, and the hand of Heav'n repell'd me.
Sel. What! will you then regret the glorious loſs,
And hazard thus a vict'ry bravely won?
Zar. Inhuman vict'ry!———thou dost not know
His love so pow'rful, this sole joy of life,

This first, best hope of earthly happineſs,
Is yet leſs pow'rful in my heart than Heaven!
To him who made that heart I offer it;
There, there, I sacrifice my bleeding paſsion;
I pour before him ev'ry guilty tear;
I beg him to efface the fond impreſsion,
And fill with his own image all my soul:
But, while I weep and sigh, repent and pray,
Remembrance brings the object of my love,
And ev'ry light illusion floats before him.
I see, I hear him, and again he charms!
Fills my glad soul, and shines 'twixt me and Heav'n!
Oh, all ye royal ancestors! Oh, father!
Mother! You Christians, and the Christians' God!
You who deprive me of this gen'rous lover!
If you permit me not to live for him,
Let me not live at all, and I am bleſs'd:
" Let me die innocent; let his dear hand
" Close the sad eyes of her he stoop'd to love,
" And I acquit my fate, and ask no more.
" But he forgives me not——regardleſs now,
" Whether, or how I live, or when I die.
" He quits me, scorns me——and I yet live on,
" And talk of death as distant."——

Sel. Ah! despair not;
Trust your eternal helper, and be happy.

Zar. Why——what has Osman done, that he too should not?
Has Heaven so nobly form'd his heart to hate it?
Gen'rous and just, beneficent and brave,
Were he but Christian——What can man be more?
I wish, methinks, this rev'rend priest was come
To free me from these doubts, which shake my soul:
Yet know not why I should not dare to hope,
That Heav'n, whose mercy all confeſs and feel,
Will pardon and approve th' alliance wish'd:
Perhaps it seats me on the throne of Syria,
To tax my pow'r for these good Christians' comfort.
Thou know'st the mighty Saladine, who first
Conquer'd this empire from my father's race,
Who, like my Osman charm'd the admiring world,
breath, though Syrian, from a Christian mother.

Sel. What mean you, madam! Ah! you do not see—

Zar. Yes, yes—I see it all; I am not blind:
I see my country and my race condemn me;
I see, that spite of all, I still love Osman.
What if I now go throw me at his feet,
And tell him there sincerely what I am?

Sel. Consider—that might cost your brother's life,
Expose the Christians, and betray you all.

Zar. You do not know the noble heart of Osman.

Sel. I know him the protector of a faith,
Sworn enemy to ours;——The more he loves,
The less will he permit you to profess
Opinions which he hates: to-night the priest,
In private introduc'd, attends you here;
You promis'd him admission———

Zar. Would I had not!
I promis'd, too, to keep this fatal secret;
My father's urg'd command requir'd it of me;
I must obey, all dangerous as it is;
Compell'd to silence, Osman is enrag'd,
Suspicion follows, and I lose his love.

Enter OSMAN.

Osm. Madam! there was a time when my charm'd heart
Made it a virtue to be lost in love;
When, without blushing, I indulg'd my flame,
And every day still made you dearer to me.
You taught me, madam, to believe my love
Rewarded and returned—nor was that hope,
Methinks, too bold for reason. Emperors
Who choose to sigh devoted at the feet
Of beauties, whom the world conceive their slaves
Have fortune's claim, at least, to sure success:
But 'twere profane to think of power in love.
Dear as my passion makes you, I decline
Possession of her charms, whose heart's another's.
You will not find me a weak, jealous lover,
By coarse reproaches, giving pain to you,
And shaming my own greatness—wounded deeply
Yet shunning and disdaining low complaint,
I come———to tell you———

Zar. Give my trembling heart
A moment's respite——
Osm. "That unwilling coldneſs
"Is the just prize of your capricious lightneſs;
"Your ready arts may spare the fruitleſs pains
"Of colouring deceit with fair pretences;
"I would not wish to hear your slight excuses;
"I cherish ignorance, to save my blushes."
Osman in every trial shall remember
That he is emperor.——Whate'er I suffer,
'Tis due to honour that I give up you,
And to my injur'd bosom take despair,
Rather than shamefully poſseſs you sighing,
Convinc'd those sighs were never meant for me—
Go, madam—you are free—from Osman's pow'r—
Expect no wrongs, but see his face no more.
Zar. At last, 'tis come—the fear'd, the murd'ring moment
Is come——and I am curs'd by earth and heaven!
[*Throws herself on the Ground.*
If it is true that I am lov'd no more——
If you——
Osm. It is too true, my fame requires it;
It is too true, that I unwilling leave you:
That I at once renounce you and adore——
Zara!——you weep!
Zar. If I am doom'd to lose you,
If I must wander o'er an empty world,
Unloving and unlov'd——Oh! yet, do justice
To the afflicted———do not wrong me doubly:
Punish me, if 'tis needful to your peace,
But say not, I deserv'd it—"This, at least,
"Believe———for not the greatneſs of your soul
"Is truth more pure and sacred———no regret
"Can touch my bleeding heart, for I have lost
"The rank of her you raise to share your throne.
"I know I never ought to have been there;
"My fate and my defects require I lose you."
But ah! my heart was never known to Osman.
May Heav'n that punishes for ever hate me,
If I regret the loſs of aught but you.
Osm. Rise—"rise, this means not love?
Zar. Strike———Strike me, Heaven!
Osm. "What! is it love to force yourself to wound

The heart you wish to gladden? But I find
Lovers least know themselves; for I believ'd,
That I had taken back the power I gave you;
Yet see!—you did but weep, and have resum'd me!
Proud as I am———I must confeſs, one wish
Evades my power——— the bleſsing to forget you.
Zara—thy tears were form'd to teach disdain,
That softneſs can disarm it.———'Tis decreed.
I must for ever love—but from what cause,
If thy consenting heart partakes my fires,
Art thou reluctant to a bleſsing meant me?
Speak! "Is it levity——or, is it fear?
"Fear of a power that, but for bleſsing thee,
"Had, without joy, been painful."——Is it artifice?
Oh! spare the needleſs pains——Art was not made
For Zara.———Art, however innocent,
Looks like deceiving———I abhorr'd it ever.

Zar. Alas! I have no art; not even enough
To hide this love, and this distreſs you give me.

Osm. New riddles! Speak with plainneſs to my soul;
What canst thou mean?

Zar. I have no power to speak it.

Osm. Is it some secret dangerous to my state?
Is it some Christian plot grown ripe against me?

Zar. Lives there a wretch so vile as to betray you!
Osman is bleſs'd beyond the reach of fear:
Fears and misfortunes threaten only Zara.

Osm. Why threaten Zara?

Zar. Permit me, at your feet,
Thus trembling, to beseech a favour from you?

Osm. A favour! Oh, you guide the will of Osman.

Zar. Ah! would to heaven our duties were united,
"Firm as our thoughts and wishes!" But this day;
But this one sad, unhappy day, permit me,
Alone, and far-divided from your eye,
To cover my distreſs, lest you, too tender,
Should see and share it with me—from to-morrow,
I will not have a thought conceal'd from you.

"*Osm.* What strange disquiet, from what strange cause!

"*Zar.* If I am really bleſs'd with Osman's l

" He will not then refuse this humble prayer."

Osm. If it must be, it must.—Be pleas'd, my will
Takes purpose from your wishes; and consent
Depends not on my choice, but your decree:
Go———but remember how he loves, who thus
Finds a delight in pain, because you give it.

Zar. It gives me more than pain to make you feel it.

Osm. And———can you, Zara, leave me?

Zar. Alas! my lord! [*Exit Zara.*

Osm. [*Alone.*] It should be yet, methinks, too soon to fly me!
Too soon, as yet, to wrong my easy faith.
The more I think, the less I can conceive,
What hidden cause should raise such strange despair!
Now, when her hopes have wings, and every wish
Is courted to be lively!—When I love,
And joy and empire press her to their bosom;
" When not alone belov'd, but ev'n a lover:
" Professing and accepting; bless'd and blessing;
" To see her eyes, through tears, shine mystic love!
" 'Tis madness! and I were unworthy power,
" To suffer longer the capricious insult!"
Yet, was I blameless?—No—I was too rash;
I have felt jealousy, and spoke it to her:
I have distrusted her—and still she loves:
Gen'rous atonement that! " and 'tis my duty
" To expiate, by a length of soft indulgence,
" The transports of a rage, which still was love.
" Henceforth, I never will suspect her false;
" Nature's plain power of charming dwells about her,
" And innocence gives force to every word.
" I owe full confidence to all she looks,
" For in her eye shines truth, and ev'ry beam
" Shoots confirmation round her."—I remark'd,
Ev'n while she wept, her soul a thousand times
Sprung to her lips, and long'd to leap to mine,
With honest, ardent utt'rance of her love.———
Who can possess a heart so low, so base,
That such tenderness, and yet have none?

Enter MELIDOR *with* ORASMIN.

Mel. This letter, great disposer of the world!
Addreſs'd to Zara, and in private brought,
Your faithful guards this moment intercepted,
And humbly offer to your sovereign eye.
Osm. Come nearer, give it me.—To Zara!—Rise.
Bring it with speed———Shame on your flattering distance——
[*Advancing, and snatching the Letter.*
Be honeſt—and approach me like a subject
Who serves the prince, yet not forgets the man.
Mel. One of the Christian slaves, whom late your bounty
Released from bondage, sought with heedful guile,
Unnotic'd to deliver it.———Discover'd
He waits, in chains, his doom from your decree.
Osm. Leave me! I tremble, as if something fatal
Were meant me from this letter——should I read it?
Oras. Who knows but it contains some happy truth
That may remove all doubts, and calm your heart?
Osm. Be it as 'twill—it shall be read—" my hands
" Have apprehension that out-reaches mine!
" Why should they tremble thus?"—'tis done—and now, [*Opens the Letter.*
Fate, be thy call obey'd——Orasmin, mark——

'There is a secret paſsage tow'rd the mosque;
That way you might escape; and unperceiv'd,
Fly your observers, and fulfil our hope;
Despise the danger, and depend on me,
Who wait you, but to die if you deceive.'

Hell! tortures! death! and woman!—What, Orasmin!
Are we awake? Heardst thou? Can this be Zara?
Oras. Would I had lost all sense—for what I heard
Has cover'd my afflicted heart with horror.
Osm. Thou seest how I am treated!
Oras. Monstrous treason!
To an affront like this you cannot———must not
Remain insensible———You, who but now,

From the most slight suspicion, felt such pain,
Must, in the horror of so black a guilt,
Find an effectual cure, and banish love.
Osm. Seek her this instant—go, Orasmin, fly—
Shew her this letter—bid her read and tremble:
Then, in the rising horrors of her guilt,
Stab her unfaithful breast, and let her die.
Say, while thou strik'st———Stay, stay, return and pity me;
" I will think first a moment—Let that Christian
" Be strait confronted with her—Stay—I will,
" I will—I know not what!"———Would I were dead!
Would I had dy'd, unconscious of this shame!
Oras. Never did prince receive so bold a wrong.
Osm. See here detected this infernal sécret!
This fountain of her tears, which my weak heart
Mistook for marks of tenderneſs and pain!
Why! what a reach has woman to deceive!
Under how fine a veil of grief and fear
Did she propose retirement till to-morrow!
And I, blind dotard! gave the fool's consent,
Sooth'd her, and suffer'd her to go!——She parted,
Diſsolv'd in tears; and parted to betray me!
" *Oras.* Reflection serves but to confirm her guilt.
" At length resume yourself; awaken thought;
" Aſsert your greatneſs; and resolve like Osman.
" *Osm.* Nerestan, too—Was this the boasted honour
" Of that proud Christian, whom Jerusalem
" Grew loud in praising! whose half envy'd virtue
" I wonder'd at myself; and felt disdain
" To be but equal to a Christian's greatneſs!
" And does he thank me thus! base infidel!
" Honest, pretending, pious, praying villain!
" Yet Zara is a thousand times more base,
" More hypocrite, than he! A slave! a wretch!
" So low, so lost, that even the vilest labours,
" In which he lay condemn'd, could never sink him
" Beneath his native infamy———Did she not know
" What I have done, what suffer'd—for her sake:"
Oras. Could you, my gracious lord! forgive my [zeal,
You would———

Osm. I know it—thou art right—I'll see her—
I'll tax her in thy presence;—I'll upbraid her———
I'll let her learn—Go—find, and bring her to me.
" *Oras.* Alas, my lord! disorder'd as you are
" What can you wish to say?
" *Osm.* I know not, now—
" But I resolve to see her—lest she think
" Her falsehood has, perhaps, the power to grieve
me." [complaints,
Oras. Believe me, sir, your threat'nings, your
What will they all produce, but Zara's tears
To quench this fancy'd anger! Your lost heart,
Seduc'd against itself, will search but reasons
To justify the guilt, which gives it pain:
Rather conceal from Zara this discovery;
And let some trusty slave convey the letter,
Reclos'd to her own hand—then shall you learn,
Spite of her frauds, disguise, and artifice,
The firmness, or abasement of her soul.
Osm. Thy counsel charms me! We'll about it
now.
" 'Twill be some recompence, at least, to see
" Her blushes when detected.———
" *Oras.* Oh, my lord!
" I doubt you in the trial———for your heart.——
" *Osm.* Distrust me not—my love, indeed, is
weak,
" But honour and disdain more strong than Zara."
Here, take this fatal letter—chuse a slave
Whom yet she never saw, and who retains
His tried fidelity—Dispatch—begone———
[*Exit Orasmin.*
Now, whither shall I turn my eyes and steps,
The surest way to shun her: and give time
For this discovering trial?———Heav'n! she's
here!

Enter ZARA.

So, madam! fortune will befriend my cause,
And free me from your fetters.—You are met
Most aptly, to dispel a new-ris'n doubt,
That claims the finest of your arts to gloss it.
Unhappy each by other, it is time
To end our mutual pain, that both may rest:

You want not generosity, but love;
My pride forgotten, my obtruded throne,
My favours, cares, respect, and tenderneſs,
Touching your gratitude, provok'd regard;
Till, by a length of benefits beſieg'd,
Your heart submitted, and you thought 'twas love:
But you deceiv'd yourself and injur'd me.
There is, I'm told, an object more deserving
Your love than Osman——I would know his name:
Be just, nor trifle with my anger: tell me
Now, while expiring pity struggles faint;
While I have yet, perhaps, the pow'r to pardon:
Give up the bold invader of my claim,
And let him die to save thee. Thou art known;
Think and resolve—While I yet speak, renounce him;
While yet the thunder rolls suspended, stay it;
Let thy voice charm me, and recall my soul,
That turns averse, and dwells no more on Zara.

Zar. Can it be Osman speaks, and speaks to Zara?
Learn, cruel! learn, that this afflicted heart,
This heart which Heav'n delights to prove by tortures,
Did it not love, has pride and power to shun you.
" Alas! you will not know me! What have I
" To fear, but that unhappy love you question?
" That love which only could outweigh the shame
" I feel, while I descend to weep my wrongs."
I know not whether Heav'n, that frowns upon me,
Has destin'd my unhappy days for yours;
But, be my fate or bleſs'd or curs'd, I swear
By honour, dearer ev'n than life or love,
Could Zara be but mistreſs of herself,
She would, with cold regard look down on kings,
And, you alone excepted, fly 'em all.
" Would you learn more, and open all my heart?
" Know then, that, spite of this renew'd injustice,
" I do not—cannot wish to love you leſs:
" That, long before you look'd so low as Zara
" She gave her heart to Osman; yours, before
" Your benefits had bought her, or your eye
" Had thrown distinction round her; never had,
" ever will acknowledge other lover:"——

And to this sacred truth, attesting Heaven,
I call thy dreadful notice! If my heart
Deserves reproach, 'tis for, but not from Osman.
Osm. "What! does she yet presume to swear sincerity!"
Oh, boldneſs of unblushing perjury!
Had I not seen; had I not read such proof
Of her light falsehood as extinguish'd doubt,
I could not be a man, and not believe her.
Zar. Alas, my lord! what cruel fears have seiz'd you?
What harsh, mysterious words were those I heard?
Osm. What fears should Osman feel, since Zara loves him?
Zar. I cannot live and answer to your voice
In that reproachful tone; your angry eye
Trembles with fury while you talk of love.
Osm. Since Zara loves him!
Zar. Is it poſsible
Osman should disbelieve it?—Again, again
Your late-repented violence returns——
Alas! what killing frowns you dart against me!
Can it be kind? Can it be just to doubt me?
Osm. No! I can doubt no longer—You may retire. [*Exit Zara.*

Re-enter ORASMIN.

Orasmin, she's perfidious, even beyond
Her sex's undiscover'd power of seeming;
"She's at the topmost point of shameleſs artifice;
"An empreſs at deceiving! Soft and easy,
"Destroying like a plague, in calm tranquillity:
"She's innocent she swears—so is the fire;
"It shines in harmleſs distance, bright and pleasing,
"Consuming nothing till it first embraces."
Say; hast thou chosen a slave?—Is he instructed?
Haste to detect her vileneſs and my wrongs.
Oras. Punctual I have obey'd your whole command:
But have you arm'd, my lord, your injur'd heart
With coldneſs and indifference? Can you hear,
All painleſs and unmov'd, the false one's shame?
Osm. Orasmin, I adore her more than ever.

Oras. My lord! my emperor! forbid it, Heaven!
Osm. I have discern'd a gleam of distant hope;
" This hateful Christian, the light growth of France,
" Proud, young, vain, amorous, conceited, rash,
" Has misconceiv'd some charitable glance,
" And judg'd it love in Zara: he alone,
" Then has offended me. Is it her fault,
" If those she charms are indiscreet and daring?
" Zara, perhaps, expected not this letter;
" And I, with rashneſs groundleſs as its writer's,
" Took fire at my own fancy, and have wrong'd her."
Now hear me with attention—Soon as night
Has thrown her welcome shadows o'er the palace;
When this Nerestan, this ungrateful Christian,
Shall lurk in expectation near our walls,
Be watchful that our guards surprise and seize him:
Then, bound in fetters and o'erwhelm'd with shame,
Conduct the daring traitor to my presence:—
But, above all, be sure you hurt not Zara;
Mindful to what supreme exceſs I love.
[*Exit Oras.*
On this last trial all my hopes depend;
Prophet, for once thy kind aſsistance lend,
Dispel the doubts that rack my anxious breast,
If Zara's innocent, thy Osman's blest. [*Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.

ZARA *and* SELIMA.

Zar. Sooth me no longer, with this vain desire;
To a recluse like me, who dares henceforth
Presume admiſsion!——the seraglio's shut——
Barr'd and impaſsable——as death to time!
Brother ne'er must hope to see me more:——
How! what unknown slave accosts us here?

Enter MELIDOR.

Mel. This letter, trusted to my hands, receive,
In secret witneſs I am wholly yours.
[*Zara reads the Letter.*

Sel. [*Aside.*] Thou everlasting ruler of the world!
Shed thy wish'd mercy on our hopeleſs tears;
Redeem us from the hands of hated infidels,
And save my princeſs from the breast of Osman.

Zar. I wish, my friend, the comfort of your counsel.

Sel. Retire—you shall be call'd—wait near—Go, leave us. [*Exit Mel.*

Zar. Read this, and tell me what I ought to answer:
For I would gladly hear my brother's voice.

Sel. Say rather you would hear the voice of Heav'n.
'Tis not your brother calls you, but your God.

Zar. I know it, nor resist his awful will;
Thou knowst that I have bound my soul by oath;
But can I—ought I—to engage myself,
My brother, and the Christians, in this danger?

Sel. 'Tis not their danger that alarms your fears;
Your love speaks loudest to your shrinking soul;
" I know your heart of strength to hazard all,
" But it has let in traitors, who surrender
" On poor pretence of safety:—Learn at least,
" To understand the weakneſs that deceives you:
" You tremble to offend your haughty lover,
" Whom wrongs and outrage but endear the more;
" Yes—you are blind to Osman's cruel nature,
" That Tartar's fierceneſs, that obscures his bounties,"
This tyger, savage in his tenderneſs,
Courts with contempt, and threatens amidst softneſs;
Yet, cannot your neglected heart efface
His fated, fix'd impreſsion!

Zar. What reproach
Can I with justice make him?———I, indeed,
Have given him cause to hate me!———
Was not his throne, was not his temple ready?

Did he not court his slave to be a queen,
And have not I declin'd it?——I who ought
To tremble, conscious of affronted power!
Have not I triumph'd o'er his pride and love?
Seen him submit his own high will to mine,
And sacrifice his wishes to my weakneſs?

Sel. Talk we no more of this unhappy paſsion:
What resolution will your virtue take?

Zar. All things combine to sink me to despair:
From the seraglio death alone will free me.
I long to see the Christians' happy climes;
Yet in the moment, while I form that prayer,
I sigh a secret wish to languish here.
How sad a state is mine! my restleſs soul
All ign'rant what to do, or what to wish:
My only perfect sense is that of pain.
Oh, guardian Heav'n! protect my brother's life,
For I will meet him, and fulfil his prayer:
Then, when from Solyma's unfriendly walls,
His absence shall unbind his sister's tongue,
Osman shall learn the secret of my birth,
My faith unshaken, and my deathleſs love;
He will approve my choice, and pity me.
I'll send my brother word he may expect me.
Call in the faithful slave ——God of my fathers!
[*Exit Selima.*
Let thy hand save me, and thy will direct.

Enter SELIMA *and* MELIDOR.

Go——tell the Christian who intrusted thee,
That Zara's heart is fix'd, nor shrinks at danger;
And that my faithful friend will, at the hour,
Expect, and introduce him to his wish.
Away——the Sultan comes; he must not find us.
[*Exeunt Zara and Selima.*

Enter OSMAN *and* ORASMIN.

Osm. Swifter, ye hours, move on; my fury glows
Impatient, and would push the wheels of time.
How now! What meſsage dost thou bring? Speak boldly—
t answer gave she to the letter sent her?
She blush'd and trembled, and grew pale, and paus'd.

Then blush'd, and read it; and again grew pale;
And wept, and smil'd, and doubted, and resolv'd:
For after all this race of varied paſsions,
When she had sent me out, and call'd me back,
Tell him (she cry'd) who has intrusted thee,
That Zara's heart is fix'd, nor shrinks at danger;
And that my faithful friend will, at the hour,
Expect, and introduce him to his wish.

Osm. Enough—begone—I have no ear for more.—
[*To the Slave.*
Leave me, thou too, Orasmin.—Leave me, life,
[*To Orasmin.*
For ev'ry mortal aspect moves my hate:
Leave me to my distraction——" I grow mad,
" And cannot bear the visage of a friend.
" Leave me to rage, despair, and shame, and wrongs;
" Leave me to seek myself——and shun mankind."
[*Exit Orasmin.*
Who am I?—Heav'n! Who am I? What resolve I?
Zara! Nerestan! sound these words like names
Decreed to join?—Why pause I?—Perish Zara——
Would I could tear her image from my heart:——
" 'Twere happier not to live at all, than live
" Her scorn, the sport of an ungrateful false one!
" And sink the sov'reign in a woman's property."

Re-enter ORASMIN.

Orasmin! Friend! return, I cannot bear
This absence from thy reason: 'twas unkind,
'Twas cruel to obey me, thus distreſs'd,
And wanting pow'r to think, when I had lost thee.
How goes the hour? Has he appear'd, this rival?
Perish the shameful sound——This villain Chris-
Has he appear'd below? [tian!

Oras. Silent and dark,
Th' unbreathing world is hush'd, as if it heard,
And listened to your sorrows.

Osm. Oh, treach'rous night!
Thou lend'st thy ready veil to ev'ry treason,
And teeming mischiefs thrive beneath thy shade.
" Orasmin, prophet, reason, truth, and love!
" After such length of benefits, to wrong me!
" How have I over-rated, how mistaken,

" The merit of her beauty!—Did I not
" Forget I was a monarch? Did I remember
" That Zara was a slave?——I gave up all;
" Gave up tranquillity, distinction, pride,
" And fell the shameful victim of my love!
" *Oras.* Sir, Sovereign, Sultan, my Imperial Mas-
" Reflect on your own greatneſs, [ter!
" The distant provocation."

Osm. Hark! Heard'st thou nothing?

Oras. My lord!

Osm. A voice, like dying groans!

Oras. I listen, but can hear nothing.

Osm. Again!—look out—he comes——

Oras. Nor tread of mortal foot—nor voice I hear:
The still seraglio lies, profoundly plung'd
In death-like silence! nothing stirs.—The air
Is soft, as infant sleep, no breathing wing
Steals through the shadows, to awaken night.

Osm. Horrors a thousand times more dark than these,
Benight my suff'ring soul——Thou dost not know
To what exceſs of tenderneſs I lov'd her:
I knew no happineſs but what she gave me,
Nor could have felt a misery but for her!
Pity this weakneſs——mine are tears, Orasmin,
That fall not oft, nor lightly.——

Oras. Tears!——Oh, Heaven! [eyes!

" *Osm.* The first which ever yet unmann'd my
" Oh! pity Zara——pity me——Orasmin,
" These but forerun the tears of destin'd blood."

Oras. Oh, my unhappy lord!—I tremble for you—

Osm. Do—tremble at my sufferings, at my love;
At my revenge too, tremble——for 'tis due,
And will not be deluded.

Oras. Hark! I hear
The steps of men, along the neighb'ring wall!

Osm. Fly—seize him—'tis Nerestan! Wait no
But drag him down to my impatient eye. [chains,

[*Exit Orasmin.*

Enter ZARA *and* SELIMA, *in the dark.*

Zar. Where art thou, Selima? Give me thy hand.
s so dark, I tremble as I step,
h fears and startings, never felt till now!

Osm. Damnation! 'tis her voice! the well-known sound,
That has so often charm'd me into baseneſs!
" Oh, the perfidious hypocrite!——she goes
" To meet th' inviting infidel!———now, now,"
[*Drawing a Dagger.*
Revenge, stand firm, and intercept his wishes;—
Revenge! On whom?—No matter—Earth and Heaven
Would blush, should I forbear: now—Zara, now!
[*Drops the Dagger.*
I must not, cannot strike, the starting steel,
Unwilling, flies my hand, and shuns to wound her.
Zar. This is the private path—come nearer, lead me———
Are we not notic'd, think'st thou? [
Sel. Fear not, madam;
It cannot now be long, ere we shall meet him.
Osm. That word has given me back my ebbing rage— [*Recovers the Dagger.*
Zar. I walk in terror, and my heart forebodes.
Who's there?—Nerestan! Is it you?—O welcome—
Osm. [*Stabbing her.*] This to thy heart——'Tis not the traitor meets thee,
'Tis the betray'd—who writes it in thy blood.
Zar. Oh, gracious Heaven! receive my parting soul,
And take thy trembling servant to thy mercy——
[*Dies.*
Osm. Soul!—then revenge has reach'd thee—I will now
Haste from this fatal place—I cannot leave her!
Whom did I strike? Was this the act of love?
Swallow me, earth!—She's silent—Zara's dead!
And should I live to see returning day, [leſs,
'Twill shew me but her blood!—shew me left joy-
In a wide, empty world, with nothing round me,
But penitence and pain—And yet, 'twas just:—
Hark!——Destiny has sent her lover to me,
To fill my vengeance, and restore my joy.

Enter ORASMIN *with* NERESTAN.

Approach, thou wretch! thou more than curs'd! come near——
Thou who, in gratitude for freedom gain'd,

Hast giv'n me miseries beyond thy own!
Thou heart of hero with a traitor's soul!
" Go—reap thy due reward, prepare to suffer,
" Whate'er inventive malice can inflict,
" To make thee feel thy death, and perish slow."
Are my commands obey'd?
Oras. All is prepar'd.
Osm. Thy wanton eyes look round, in search of her
Whose love, descending to a slave like thee,
From my dishonour'd hand receiv'd her doom.
See! where she lies——
Ner. Oh, fatal, rash mistake!
Osm. Dost thou behold her, slave?
Ner. Unhappy sister!
Osm. Sister!——Didst thou say sister? If thou didst,
Bleſs me with deafneſs, Heaven!
Ner. Tyrant! I did——
She was my sister——All that now is left thee,
Dispatch——From my distracted heart drain next
The remnant of the royal Christian blood:
Old Lusignan, expiring in my arms,
Sent his too wretched son, with his last bleſsing,
To his now murder'd daughter!——
Would I had seen the bleeding innocent!
I would have liv'd to speak to her in death;
Would have awaken'd in her languid heart,
A livelier sense of her abandon'd God:
That God, who left by her, forsook her too,
And gave the poor lost sufferer to thy rage.
Osm. Thy sister!—Lusignan her father—Selima!
Can this be true?—and have I wrong'd thee, Zara?
Sel. Thy love was all the cloud, 'twixt her and Heav'n!
Osm. Be dumb——for thou art base, to add distraction
To my already more than bleeding heart.
And was thy love sincere?—What then remains?
Ner. Why should a tyrant hesitate on murder;
There now remains but mine, of all the blood
Which, through thy father's cruel reign and thine,
Has never ceas'd to stream on Syria's sands.
Restore a wretch to his unhappy race;
Nor hope that torments, after such a scene,
Can force one feeble groan to feast thy anger.
Waste my fruitleſs words in empty air;

The tyrant, o'er the bleeding wound he made,
Hangs his unmoving eye, and heeds not me.
Osm. Oh, Zara!———
Oras. Alas, my lord, return—whither would grief
Transport your gen'rous heart?——This Christian dog——
Osm. Take off his fetters, and observe my will:
To him, and all his friends, give instant liberty:
Pour a profusion of the richest gifts
On these unhappy Christians; and when heap'd
With vary'd benefits, and charg'd with riches,
Give 'em safe conduct to the nearest port.
Oras. But, sir———
Osm. Reply not, but obey.———
Fly—nor dispute thy master's last command,
Thy prince, who orders—and thy friend, who loves thee!
Go—lose no time—farewell—begone—and thou!
Unhappy warrior—yet less lost than I——
Haste from our bloody land—and to thy own,
Convey this poor, pale object of my rage.
Thy king, and all his Christians, when they hear
Thy miseries, shall mourn 'em with their tears;
But, if thou tell'st 'em mine, and tell'st 'em truly,
They who shall hate my crime, shall pity me.
Take, too, this poniard with thee, which my hand
Has stain'd with blood far dearer than my own;
Tell 'em—with this I murder'd her I lov'd;
The noblest and most virtuous among women!
The soul of innocence, and pride of truth:
Tell 'em, I laid my empire at her feet:
Tell 'em, I plung'd my dagger in her blood
Tell 'em, I so ador'd—and thus reveng'd her.
[*Stabs himself.*
Rev'rence this hero—and conduct him safe. [*Dies.*
Ner. Direct me, great inspirer of the soul!
How should I act, how judge in this distress!
Amazing grandeur! and detested rage!
Ev'n I, amidst my tears, admire this foe,
And mourn his death, who liv'd to give me woe.
[*Exeunt.*

EPILOGUE.

HERE, take a surfeit, sirs, of being jealous,
And shun the pains that plague those Turkish fellows:
Where love and death join hands, their darts confounding: [ing.
Save us, good Heaven, from this new way of wound-
Curs'd climate! where to cards a lone-left woman
Has only one of her black guards to summon! [at:
Sighs, and sits mop'd, with her tame beast to gaze
And that cold treat, is all the game she plays at!
For, should she once some abler hand be trying,
Poniard's the word! and the first deal is—dying!
'Slife! shou'd the bloody whim get ground in Britain,
Where woman's freedom has such heights to sit on;
Dagger, provok'd, would bring on desolation:
And murder'd belles unpeople half the nation!——
Fain would I hope this play, to move compassion;
And live to hunt suspicion out of fashion.———
Four motives strongly recommend the lover's
Hate of this weakness that our scene discovers.
First then—A woman will, or won't—depend on't:
If she will do't, she will:—and, there's an end on't.
But, if she won't—since safe and sound your trust is,
Fear is affront: and jealousy injustice.
Next,—he who bids his dear do what she pleases,
Blunts wedlock's edge; and all its torture eases:
For—not to feel your suff'rings, is the same,
As not to suffer:—All the diff'rence—name.
Thirdly—The jealous husband wrongs his honour;
No wife goes lame, without some hurt upon her:
And the malicious world will still be guessing,
Who oft's dines out, dislikes her own cook's dressing.
Fourth, and lastly,—to conclude my lecture,
If you would fix the inconstant wife—respect her.
She who perceives her virtues over-rated,
Will fear to have the account more justly stated:
Then borrowing, from her pride, the good wife's seeming,
And really such—to merit your esteeming.

A

COMIC CHORUS;

OR,

INTERLUDES,

DESIGNED TO BE

SUNG BETWEEN THE ACTS OF ZARA.

PROLOGUE.

By Mr. BEARD, *and Mrs.* CLIVE, *from opposite Entrances.*

She. So, sir—you're a man of your word. [you?
He. Who would break it, when summon'd by
She. Very fine that—but pray have you heard,
What it is you are summon'd to do?
He. Not a word—but expected to see
Something new in the musical way.
She. Why, this author has cast you and me,
As a Prologue, it seems, to his play.
He. What then is its tuneful name,
Robinhood of the Greenwood tree?
Or what good old ballad of fame
Has he built into tra-ge-dy?
She. Though he rails against songs, he thought fit,
Most gravely to urge and implore us,
In aid of his tragical wit,
To erect ourselves into a Chorus?
[*Laughing.*
He. A Chorus! what's that—a composing
Of groans, to the rants of his madness?
She. No—he hinders the boxes from dozing,
By mixing some spirit with sadness.
He. So then—'tis our task, I suppose,
To sing sober sense into relish,
Strike up, at each tragical close,
And unheeded moral embellish.

She. 'Twas the custom, you know, once in Greece,
And if here 'tis not witty, 'tis new.
He. Well then, when you find an act cease,
[*Turning to the Boxes.*
Tremble ladies——
She. And, gentlemen, too—— [*To the Men.*
If I give not the beaux good advice, [*Merrily.*
Let me dwindle to recitative!
He. Nor will I to the belles be more nice,
When I catch 'em, but here, to receive.
She. If there's ought to be learnt from the play,
I shall sit in a nook, here, behind,
Popping out in the good ancient way,
Now and then, with a piece of my mind.
He. But suppose, that no moral should rise,
Worth the ears of the brave or the fair!
She. Why, we'll then give the word—and advise——
Face about, and stand all as ye were.

AFTER THE

FIRST ACT.

SONG *in Duet.*

He. The Sultan's a bridegroom—the slaves are set free.
And none must presume to wear fetters but he!
Before honey-moon,
Love's fiddle's in tune;
So we think (silly souls!) 'tis always to be:
For the man that is blind—how should he foresee!
She. I hate these hot blades, who so fiercely begin;
To baulk a rais'd hope is a cowardly sin!
The maid that is wise, let her always procure
Rather a grave than a spirited wooer:
What she loses at breakfast, at supper she'll win,
But your amorous violence never endures:
For to dance without doors
Is the way to be weary, before we get in.
Pray how does it happen, that paſsion so gay,
Blooms, fades, and falls away,
A rose of this morn, that at night must decay?

Woman, I fear,
Does one thing appear,
But is found quite another, when look'd on too near.
She. Ah—no—
Not—so—
'Tis the fault of you men, who, with flames of desire
Set your palates on fire,
And dream not, that eating—will appetite tire;
So resolve in your heat,
To do nothing, but eat,
Till, alas! on a sudden—you sleep o'er your meat!
Therefore, learn, O ye fair!——
He. And, you lovers, take care——
She. That you trust not before-hand——
He. That you trust not at all.
She. Man was born to deceive.
He. Woman form'd to believe.
Both. Trust not one of us all!
For to stand on sure ground is the way not to fall.

AFTER THE

SECOND ACT.

Mrs. CLIVE *(Sola) to a Flute.*

Oh, jealousy! thou bane of bleeding love?
Ah, how unhappy we!
Doom'd by the partial powers above,
Eternal slaves to thee!
Not more unstaid than lovers' hearts the wind!
This moment dying—and the next unkind.
Ah! wavering, weak desires of frail mankind!
With pleading paſsion ever to pursue,
Yet triumph, only to undo.

Go to the deeps, below, thou joyleſs fiend,
And never rise again to sow despair!
Nor you, ye heedleſs fair, occasions lend,
To blast your blooming hopes, and bring on ca

Never conclude your innocence secure,
Prudence alone makes love endure.
[*As she is going off, he meets her, and pulls her back, detaining her, while he sings what follows.*

He. Ever, ever, doubt the fair in sorrow,
Mourning, as if they felt compaſsion:
Yet what they weep for to-day—to-morrow,
They'll be first to laugh into faſhion.
None are betray'd, if they truſt not the charmer;
Jealousy guards the weak from falling;
Would you never catch—you muſt oft alarm her,
Hearts to deceive is a woman's calling.

[*After the Song, he lets her go, and they join in a Duet.*

She. Come let us be friends, and no longer abuſe,
Condemn, and accuſe,
Each other.
He. Would you have us agree, you muſt fairly
The love we careſs, [confeſs,
We ſmother.
She. I am loth to think that——
He. Yet, you know, it is true;
She. Well—what if I do,
No matter. [ſtrife?
He. Could you teach us a way to love on, without
She. Suit the firſt part of life
To the latter. [blown,
He. 'Tis an honeſt advice; for when love is new
Gay colours are ſhown,
Too glaring.
She. Then alas, for poor wives!—comes a'bluſt'r-
And blows 'em away, [ing day,
Moſt ſcaring!

AFTER THE

THIRD ACT.

By Mr. BEARD *alone.*

[illegible]h, ye beauties!——gay, and young,
[illegible]k the painful woes and weeping,
[illegible]rc'd concealment ſprung,
[illegible] the ſin of ſecret-keeping.

Tell then—nor veil a willing heart,
When the lover, lov'd alarms it;
But—to sooth the pleasing smart,
Whisper the glowing wish that warms it.
She that would hide the gentle flame,
Does but teach her hope to languish;
She that boldly tells her aim,
Flies from the path that leads to anguish.
Not that too far your trust should go;
All that you say—to all discover;
All that you do——but two should know,
One of 'em you, and one your lover.
[*She meets him going off.*
She. Ah! man, thou wert always a traitor,
Thou giv'st thy advice to betray;
Ah! form'd for a rover by nature,
Thou leader of love the wrong way.
Would women let women advise them,
They could not so easily stray,
'Tis trusting to lovers supplies 'em
With will and excuse to betray.
She's safe, who, in guard of her paſsion,
Far, far, from confeſsing her pain,
Keeps silence, in spite of the fashion,
Nor suffers her eyes to explain.

AFTER THE

FOURTH ACT.

Duet.

She. Well, what do you think—— of these sorrows
and joys, [noise?
These calms, and these whirlwinds—this silence and
Which love, in the bosom of man, employs?
He. For my part, would lovers be govern'd by me,
Not one of you women so wish'd-for should be.
Since here we a proof of your mischief see.
She. Why, what would you do to escape the di-
treſs? [gur
He. I would do—I would do—by my soul I

She. Poor wretch, by my soul, I imagin'd no leſs.
Come, come—let me tell you, these tempests of love,
Did but blow up desire, its briskneſs to prove,
Which else would—you know—too lazily move.
Were women like logs of a make to lie still,
Men would sleep and grow dull—but our absolute
Sets life all a whirling, like wheels in a mill. [will
He Ambition in woman, like valour in man,
Tempts danger—from which they'd be safe if they ran:
And once get 'em in—get 'em out how you can.
She. Pray, what will you give me to teach you the trick,
To keep your wife pleas'd, either healthy or sick?
He. The man who hits that, sure, must touch to the quick! [pain,
She. Learn this—and depend on a life without
Say nothing to vex her, yet let her complain;
Submit to your fate—and disturb not her reign:
Be mop'd when she's sad—and be pleas'd when she's gay,
Believe her, and trust her—and give her—her way:
For want of this rule—there's the devil to pay.
Both. For want of this rule—there's the devil to pay.

THE

DEVIL TO PAY;

OR, THE

WIVES METAMORPHOS'D.

A

FARCE.

BY

CHARLES COFFEY, ESQ.

LONDON:

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1805.

THE

DEVIL TO PAY.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Sir John Loverule, *an honest Country Gentleman, beloved for his Hospitality.*

Butler,
Cook,
Footman,
Coachman, } *Servants to Sir* John.

Jobson, *a Psalm singing Cobler, Tenant to Sir* John.

Doctor.

Lady Loverule, *Wife to Sir* John, *a proud canting, brawling, fanatical Shrew.*

Lucy,
Lettice. } *Her Maids.*

Nell, Jobson's *Wife, an innocent Country Girl.*

Tenants, Servants.

SCENE, a Country Village.

ACT I.

SCENE I. The Cobler's House.

JOBSON *and* NELL.

Nell. PRITHEE, good Jobson, stay with me to night, and for once make merry at home.

Job. Peace, peace, you jade, and go spin; for if I lack any thread for my stitching, I will punish you by virtue of my sovereign authority.

Nell. Ay marry, no doubt of that; while

take your swing at the ale-house, spend your substance, get drunk as a beast, then come home like a sot, and use one like a dog.

Job. Nouns, do you prate? Why, how now, brazen face, do you speak ill of the government? Don't you know, hufsey, that I am king in my own house, and that this is treason against my majesty.

Nell. Did ever one hear such stuff! But I pray you now, Jobson, don't go to the ale-house to-night.

Job. Well, I'll humour you for once, but don't grow saucy upon't; for I'm invited by Sir John Loverule's butler, and am to be princely drunk with punch at the hall-place; we shall have a bowl large enough to swim in.

Nell. But they say, husband, the new lady will not suffer a stranger to enter her doors; she grudges even a draught of small beer to her own servants; and several of the tenants have come home with broken heads from her ladyship's own hands, only for smelling strong beer in the house.

Job. A pox on her for a fanatical jade! She has almost distracted the good knight: but she's now abroad, feasting with her relations, and will scarce come home to night; and we are to have much drink, a fiddle, and merry gambols.

Nell. O, dear husband, let me go with you; we'll be as merry as the night's long.

Job. Why, how now, you bold baggage, would you be carried to a company of smooth fac'd, eating, drinking, lazy serving men; no, no, you jade, I'll not be a cuckold.

Nell. I'm sure they would make me welcome; you promis'd I should see the house, and the family has not been here before, since you married and brought me home.

Job. Why, thou most audacious strumpet, dar'st thou dispute with me thy lord and master! Get in and spin, or else my strap will wind about thy ribs most confoundedly.

AIR I. *The Twitcher.*

He that has the best wife,
She's the plague of his life;

But for her who will scold and will quarrel,
Let him cut her off short
Of her meat and her sport,
And ten times a-day hoop her barrel, brave boys,
And ten times a-day hoop her barrel.

Nell. Well, we poor women must always be slaves, and never have any joy; but you men run and ramble at your pleasure.

Job. Why you most pestilent baggage, will you be hoop'd? Begone.

Nell. I must obey. [*Going.*

Job. Stay; now I think on't, here's sixpence for you; get ale and apples, stretch and puff thyself up with lamb's wool; rejoice and revel thyself; be drunk and wallow in thy own sty, like a grumbling sow as thou art.

He that has the best wife,
She's the plague of his life; &c. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. Sir John's.

BUTLER, COOK, FOOTMAN, COACHMAN, LUCY, LETTICE, &c.

But. I would our dancing neighbours were here, that we might rejoice a little while our termagant lady is abroad. I have made a most sovereign bowl of punch.

Lucy. We had need rejoice sometimes, for our devilish new lady will never suffer it in her hearing.

But. I will maintain there is more mirth in a galley than in our family. Our master, indeed, is the worthiest gentleman—nothing but sweetness and liberality.

Foot. But here's a house turn'd topsy-turvy, from heav'n to hell, since she came hither.

" *Lucy.* His former lady was all virtue and mild-
" ness.

" *But.* Ay, rest her soul, she was so; but this is
" inspired with a legion of devils, who make her
" lay about her like a fury.

" *Lucy.* I am sure I always feel her in my h
" if her complexion don't please her, or sh

" yellow in a morning, I am sure to look black and " blue for it before night.

" *Cook.* Pox on her, I dare not come within her " reach. I have some six broken heads already. " A lady, quotha! a she-bear is a civiler animal.

" *Foot.* Heav'n help my poor master! this de- " vilish termagant scolding woman will be the " death of him: I never saw a man so alter'd in " all the days of my life.

" *Cook.* There's a perpetual motion in that tongue " of her's, and a damn'd shrill pipe, enough to " break the drum of a man's ear."

Enter JOBSON.

But. Welcome, welcome " all; this is our wish. " Honest old acquaintance," Goodman Jobson! how dost thou?

Job. By my troth, I am always sharp-set towards punch, and am now come with a firm resolution, though but a poor cobler, to be as richly drunk as a lord; I am a true English heart, and look upon drunkenneſs as the best part of the liberty of the subject.

But. Come, Jobson, we'll bring out our bowl of punch in solemn proceſsion and then for a song to crown our happineſs.

[*They all go out, and return with a Bowl of Punch.*

AIR II. *Charles of Sweden.*

Come, jolly Bacchus, god of wine,
Crown this night with pleasure;
Let none at cares of life repine,
To destroy our pleasure.
Fill up the mighty sparkling bowl,
That ev'ry true and loyal soul
May drink and sing without controul,
To support our pleasure.

Thus, mighty Bacchus, shalt thou be
Guardian of our pleasure;
That under thy protection we
May enjoy new pleasure.

And as the hours glide swift away,
We'll in thy name invoke their stay,
And sing thy praises that we may
Live and die with pleasure.

But. The king and the royal family in a brimmer—

AIR III.

Here's a good health to the king,
And send him a prosperous reign;
O'er hills and high mountains,
We'll drink dry the fountains,
Until the sun rises again, brave boys,
Until the sun rises again.

Then here's to thee my boy boon,
And here's to thee, my boy boon;
As we've tarry'd all day
For to drink down the sun, [boys,
So we'll tarry and drink down the moon brave
So we'll tarry and drink down the moon.
[*Omnes huzza.*

Enter Sir JOHN *and* LADY.

Lady. O heaven and earth, what's here within my doors! Is hell broke loose? What troop of fiends are here? Sirrah, you impudent rascal, speak!

Sir John. For shame, my dear.—As this is a time of mirth and jollity, it has always been the custom of my house, to give my servants liberty in this season, and to treat my country neighbours, that with innocent sports they may divert themselves.

Lady. I say, meddle with your own affairs; I will govern my own house without your putting in an oar. Shall I ask you leave to correct my own servants?

Sir John. I thought, madam, this had been my house, and these my tenants and servants.

Lady. Did I bring a fortune to be thus abus'd and snub'd before people? Do you call my authority in question, ungrateful man? Look you to yo" dogs and horses abroad; but it will be my provi

to govern here; nor will I be controll'd by e'er a hunting, hawking knight in Christendom.

AIR IV.

Sir John. Ye gods! you gave to me a wife
Out of your grace and favour,
To be the comfort of my life.
And I was glad to have her:
But if your providence divine
For greater bliss design her,
To obey your wills at any time,
I am ready to resign her.

This it is to be married to a continual tempest. Strife and noise, canting and hypocrisy, are eternally afloat—'Tis impossible to bear it long.

Lady. Ye filthy scoundrels, and odious jades, I'll teach you to junket thus, and steal my provisions: I shall be devour'd at this rate.

But. I thought, madam, we might be merry once upon a holiday.

Lady. Holiday, you popish cur: is one day more holy than another? and if it be, you'll be sure to get drunk upon it, you rogue. [*Beats him.*] You minx, you impudent flirt, are you jigging it after an abominable fiddle? all dancing is whorish, hussey. [*Lugs her by the Ears.*

Lucy. O lud, she has pull'd off both my ears.

Sir John. Pray, madam, consider your sex and quality: I blush for your behaviour.

Lady. Consider your incapacity: you shall not instruct me. Who are you thus muffled, you buzzard? [*She beats 'em all, Jobson steals by.*

Job. I am an honest, plain, psalm singing cobler, madam: if your ladyship would but go to church, you might hear me above all the rest there.

Lady. I'll try thy voice here first, villain.
[*Strikes him.*

Job. Nounz! what a pox, what a devil ails you?

Lady. O profane wretch! wicked varlet!

Sir J[illegible]n. For shame, your behaviour is mon-

ever poor lady so miserable in a bru-

tish husband as I am? I that am so pious and religious a woman!

Job. [*Sings.*] He that has the best wife,
She's the plague of his life,
But for her that will scold and will quarrel—
[*Exit.*

Lady. O rogue, scoundrel, villain!

Sir John. Remember modesty.

Lady. I'll rout you all with a vengeance—"I'll "spoil your squeaking treble.

[*Beats the Fiddle about the blind Man's Head.*

"*Fid.* O murder, murder! I am a dark man—"which way shall I get hence!—O heav'n, she has "broke my fiddle, and undone me and my wife and "children.

"*Sir John.* Here, poor fellow, take your staff "and begone: there's money to buy you two such: "that's your way. [*Exit Fidler.*

"*Lady.* Methinks you are very liberal, sir; must "my estate maintain you in your profuseneſs?"

Sir John. Go up to your closet, pray, and compose your mind.

Lady. O wicked man! to bid me pray.

Sir John. A man can't be completely curst, I see, without marriage; but since there is such a thing as separate maintenance, she shall to-morrow enjoy the benefit of it.

AIR V. *Of all Comforts I miscarry'd.*

Of the states in life so various,
Marriage, sure, is most precarious;
'Tis a maze so strangely winding,
Still we are new mazes finding:
'Tis an action so severe,
That nought but death can set us clear.
Happy's the man, from wedlock free,
Who knows to prize his liberty.
Were men wary
How they marry.
We should not be by half so full of misery.

[*Knocking at the Door.*] Here, where are my servants? Must they be frighted from me?—Ver there—see who knocks.

Lady. Within there—Where are my sluts? Ye drabs, ye queans—lights there.

Enter SERVANTS, *sneaking, with Candles.*

But. Sir, it is a doctor that lives ten miles off: he practises physic, and is an astrologer; your worship knows him very well; he is a cunning man, makes almanacks, and can help people to their goods again.

Enter DOCTOR.

Doct. Sir, I humbly beg your honour's pardon for this unseasonable intrusion; but I am benighted, and 'tis so dark that I can't possibly find my way home; and knowing your worship's hospitality, desire the favour to be harbour'd under your roof to-night.

Lady. Out of my house, you lewd conjurer, you magician.

Doct. Here's a turn! here's a change!——Well, if I have any art, you shall smart for this. [*Aside.*

Sir John. You see, friend, I am not master of my own house: therefore, to avoid any uneasiness, go down the lane about a quarter of a mile, and you'll see a cobler's cottage; stay there a little, and I'll send my servant to conduct you to a tenant's house, where you'll be well entertain'd.

Doct. I thank you, sir; I'm your most humble servant—But as for your lady there, she shall this night feel my resentment. [*Exit.*

Sir John. Come, madam, you and I must have some conference together.

Lady. Yes; I will have a conference and a reformation too in this house, or I'll turn it upside down—I will.

AIR VI. *Contented country Farmer.*

Sir John. Grant me, ye pow'rs, but this request,
And let who will the world contest;
Convey her to some distant shore,
Where I may ne'er behold her more;
Or let me to some cottage fly,
In freedom's arms to live and die.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. The Cobler's.

NELL *and the* DOCTOR.

Nell. Pray, sir, mend your draught, if you please: you are very welcome, sir.

Doct. Thank you heartily, good woman; and to requite your civility, I'll tell you your fortune.

Nell. O pray do, sir, I never had my fortune told me in my life.

Doct. Let me behold the lines of your face.

Nell. I'm afraid, sir, 'tis none of the cleanest, I have been about dirty work all this day.

Doct. Come, come, 'tis a good face; be not asham'd of it; you shall shew it in greater places suddenly.

Nell. O dear, sir, I shall be mightily asham'd; I want dacity when I come before great folks.

Doct. You must be confident, and fear nothing; there is much happineſs attends you.

Nell. Oh me! this is a rare man: Heav'n be thank'd.

Doct. To-morrow before the sunrise, you shall be the happiest woman in this country.

Nell. How, by to-morrow!—Alack-a-day, sir, how can that be?

Doct. No more shall you be troubled with a surly husband that rails at and straps you.

Nell. Lud, how came he to know that? he must be a conjurer. Indeed my husband is somewhat rugged, and in his cups will beat me, but it is not much; he's an honest pains-taking man, and I let him have his way. Pray sir, take t'other cup of ale.

Doct. I thank you——Believe me, to-morrow you shall be the richest woman i'th' hundred, and ride in your own coach.

Nell. O father, you jeer me.

Doct. By my art, I do not. But mark my words; be confident, and bear all out, or worse will follow.

Nell. Never fear, sir, I warrant you.——O Gemeni! a coach!

AIR X. *Now ponder well, ye Parents dear.*

In Bath, a wanton wife did dwell,
As Chaucer he did write,
Who wantonly did spend her time
In many a fond delight.
All on a time so sick she was,
And she at length did die,
And then her soul at Paradise
Did knock most mightily.

Lady. Why, villain, rascal, screech-owl, who makest a worse noise than a dog hung in the pales, or a hog in a high wind. Where are all my servants? Somebody come and hamstring this rogue. [*Knocks.*

Job. Why, how now, you brazen quean! you must get drunk with the conjuror, must you! I'll give you money another time to spend in lamb's wool, you saucy jade, shall I?

Lady. Monstrous! I can find no bell to ring. Where are my servants? They shall toss him in a blanket.

Job. Ay, the jade's asleep still: the conjurer told her she should keep her coach, and she is dreaming of her equipage. [*Sings.*

I will come in, in spite, she said,
Of all such churls as thee;
Thou art the cause of all our pain,
Our grief and misery.
Thou first broke the commandement,
In honour of thy wife:
When Adam heard her say these words,
He ran away for life.

Lady. Why, husband! Sir John! Will you suffer me to be thus insulted?

Job. Husband! Sir John! what a pox, has she knighted me! and my name's Zekel too: a good test, faith.

Lady. Ha! he's gone, he is not in the bed. 'n, where am I? "Foh, what loathsome smells

" are here?" Canvaſs sheets, and a filthy ragged curtain; a beastly rug, and a flock-bed. Am I awake, or is it all a dream? What rogue is that? Sirrah,—Where am I? Who brought me hither? What rascal are you?

Job. This is amazing—I never heard such words from her before. If I take my strap to you, I'll make you know your husband; I'll teach you better manners, you saucy drab.

Lady. Oh, astonishing impudence! You my husband, sirrah? I'll have you hang'd, you rogue; I'm a lady. Let me know who has given me a sleeping draught, and convey'd me hither, you dirty varlet?

Job. A sleeping-draught! yes, you drunken jade, you had a sleeping-draught, with-a-pox to ye. What, has not your lamb's wool done working yet?

Lady. Where am I? Where has my villanous husband put me? Lucy! Lettice! Where are my queans?

Job. Ha, ha, ha! What does she call her maids too? The conjuror has made her mad as well as drunk.

Lady. He talks of conjurors; sure I am bewitched! Ha! what clothes are here? a linsey-woolsey gown, a calico hood, a red bays petticoat: I am removed from my own house by witchcraft. What must I do? what will become of me?

[*Horns wind without.*

Job. Hark! the hunters and the merry horns are abroad. Why, Nell, you lazy jade, 'tis break of day; to work, to work; come and spin, you drab, or I'll tan your hide for you. What-a-pox, must I be at work two hours before you in the morning?

Lady. Why, sirrah, thou impudent villain! dost thou not know me, you rogue?

Job. Know you? yes, I know you well enough, and I'll make you know me before I have done with you.

Lady. I am Sir John Loverule's lady; how came I here?

Job. Sir John Loverule's lady! No, Nell, not quite so bad neither: that damn'd stingy, faur

whore, plagues every one that comes near her—the whole country curses her.

Lady. Nay, then I'll hold no longer——You rogue, you insolent villain, I'll teach you better manners.

[*Flings the Bedstaff and other Things at him.*

Job. This is more than ever I saw by her; I never had an ill word from her before. Come, strap, I'll try your mettle; I'll sober you, I warrant you, quean. [*He straps her—she flies at him.*

Lady. I'll pull your throat out; I'll tear out your eyes; I am a lady, sirrah. O murder, murder! Sir John Loveruke will hang you for this.—Murder, murder!

Job. Come, hussey, leave fooling, and come to your spinning, or else I'll lamb you, you never were so lamb'd since you were an inch long. Take it up, you jade.

[*She flings it down—he straps her.*

Lady. Hold, hold! I'll do any thing.

Job. Oh, I thought I should bring you to yourself again.

Lady. What shall I do? I can't spin. [*Aside.*

Job. I'll into my stall; 'tis broad day now.

[*Works and sings.*

AIR XI. *Come let us prepare.*

Let matters of state
Disquiet the great,
The cobler has nought to perplex him;
Has nought but his wife
To ruffle his life,
And her he can strap if she vex him
He's out of the pow'r
Of Fortune, that whore,
Since low as can be she has thrust him:
From duns he's secure;
For, being so poor,
There's none to be found that will trust him.

Heyday, I think the jade's brain is turn'd! What, have you forgot to spin, hussey?

Lady. But I have not forgot to run. I'll e'en try

my feet: I shall find somebody in the town, sure, that will succour me. [*She runs out.*

Job. What, does she run for it?—I'll after her. [*He runs out.*

SCENE VI. Sir John's *House.*

NELL *in Bed.*

Nell. What pleasant dreams I have had to-night? Methought I was in paradise, upon a bed of violets and roses, and the sweetest husband by my side? Ha, bleſs me! where am I now? What sweets are these? No garden in the spring can equal them—Am I on a bed?—The sheets are sarsenet, sure; no linen ever was so fine.——What a gay silken robe have I got?——O heaven! I dream!—Yet if this be a dream, I would not wish to wake again.—Sure I died last night, and went to heav'n; and this is it.

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. Now must I wake an alarm that will not lie still again till midnight at soonest: the first greeting, I suppose, will be jade or whore. Madam, madam!

Nell. O gemini! who's this? What dost say, sweetheart?

Lucy. Sweetheart! Oh lud, sweetheart! The best names I have had these three months from her have been slut or whore.—What gown and ruffles will your ladyship wear to-day.

Nell. What does she mean? Ladyship, gown, and ruffles!——Sure I am awake!—Oh, I remember the cunning man now.

Lucy. Did your ladyship speak?

Nell. Ay, child, I'll wear the same I did yesterday.

Lucy. Mercy upon me!—Child!—Here's a miracle!

Enter LETTICE.

Let. Is my lady awake?—Have you had her shoe or her slipper at your head yet?

Lucy. Oh no, I'm overjoy'd; she's in the kinde

humour—Go to the bed and speak to her—Now is your time.

Let. Now's my time! what, to have another tooth beat out.——Madam?

Nell. What dost say, my dear?—O father, what would she have?

Let. What work will your ladyship please to have done to-day? shall I work plain work, or go to my stitching?

Nell. Work, child! 'tis holiday; no work to-day.

Let. Oh mercy! am I, or she, awake? or do we both dream?—Here's a blest change!

Lucy. If it continues, we shall be a happy family.

Let. Your ladyship's chocolate is ready.

Nell. Mercy on me, what's that?—some garment, I suppose. [*Aside.*] Put it on then, sweetheart.

Let. Put it on, madam! I have taken it off; 'tis ready to drink.

Nell. I mean, put it by; I don't care for drinking now.

Enter COOK.

Cook. Now go I like a bear to the stake, to know her scurvy ladyship's command about dinner. How many rascally names must I be called?

Let. Oh, John Cook, you'll be out of your wits to find my lady in so sweet a temper.

Cook. What a devil, are they all mad?

Lucy. Madam, here's the cook come about dinner.

Nell. Oh, there's a fine cook! He looks like one of your gentlefolks. [*Aside.*] Indeed honest man, I'm very hungry now; pray get me a rasher upon the coals, a piece of ewe-milk cheese, and some white bread.

Cook. Hey, what's to do here? my head turns round. Honest man! I look'd for rogue or rascal at least.—She's strangely chang'd in her diet, as well as her humour. [*Aside.*]—I'm afraid, madam, cheese and bacon will sit very heavy on your ladyship's stomach in a morning. If you please, ma'am, I'll toss you up a white fricasee of chickens

in a trice, madam; or what does your ladyship think of a veal sweetbread?

Nell. Ev'n what you will, good cook.

Cook. Good cook! good cook!—Ah, 'tis a sweet "lady." Mercy on us! miracles will never cease.

Enter BUTLER.

"Oh, kiſs me, Chip, I am out of my wits—We have "the kindest, sweetest lady.

"*But.* You shamming rogue, I think you are "out of your wits, all of ye; the maids look mer-"rily too,"

Lucy. Here's the butler, madam, to know your ladyship's orders.

Nell. Oh, pray, Mr. Butler, let me have some small-beer, when my breakfast comes in.

But. Mr. Butler! Mr. Butler!—I shall be turn'd into stone with amazement. [*Aside.*] Would not your Ladyship rather have a glaſs of Frontiniac or Lacryme?

Nell. O dear, what hard names are these! but I must not betray myself. [*Aside.*] Well, which you please, Mr. Butler.

Enter COACHMAN.

"*But.* Go, get you in, and be rejoiced as I am.

"*Coach.* The cook has been making his game, I "know not how long: what, do you banter too?"

Lucy. Madam, the coachman.

Coach. I come to know if your ladyship goes out to-day, and which you'll have, the coach or chariot?

Nell. Good-lack-a-day!—I'll ride in the coach, if you please.

Coach. The sky will fall, that's certain. [*Exit.*

Nell. I can hardly think I am awake yet. How well pleased they all seem to wait upon me!—O notable cunning man! My head turns round!—I am quite giddy with my own happineſs.

AIR XII. *What though I am a country Lass.*

Though late I was a cobler's wife,
In cottage most obscure-a,
In plain-stuff gown, and short-ear'd coif,
Hard labour did endure-a:

The scene is chang'd, I'm alter'd quite,
And from poor humble Nell-a,
I'll learn to dance, to read, and write;
And from all bear the bell-a. [*Exit.*

Enter Sir JOHN, *meeting his Servants.*

But. Oh, sir, here's the rarest news!

Lucy. There never was the like, sir! You'll be overjoy'd and amaz'd!

Sir John. What, are ye mad?—What's the matter with ye?—How now! here's a new face in my family!—What's the meaning of all this?

But. Oh, sir, the family's turn'd upside down!—We are almost distracted; the happiest people!—

Lucy. Ay, my lady, sir; my lady—

Sir John. What, is she dead?

But. Dead! Heav'n forbid!—O, she's the best woman, the sweetest lady——

Sir John. This is astonishing—I must go and inquire into this wonder. If this be true, I shall rejoice indeed.

But. 'Tis true, sir, upon my honour. Long live Sir John and my Lady. Huzza.

Enter NELL.

Nell. I well remember the cunning man warned me to bear all out with confidence; or worse, he said, would follow.——I am asham'd, and know not what to do with all this ceremony. I am amaz'd, and out of my senses.—I look'd in the glass, and saw a gay fine thing I knew not.——Methought my face was not at all like that I have seen at home in a piece of looking-glass fastened upon the cupboard. But great ladies, they say, have flattering glasses, that shew them far unlike themselves, whilst poor folks' glasses represent them e'en just as they are.

"AIR XIII. *When I was a Dame of honour.*

"Fine ladies with an artful grace
"Disguise each native feature;
"Whilst flatt'ring glasses shew the face,
"As made by art, not nature:
"But we poor folks in home-spun grey,
"By patch nor washes tainted,
"Look fresh and sweeter far than they,
"That still are finely painted."

Lucy. Oh, madam, here's my master just return'd from hunting.

Enter Sir JOHN.

Nell. O gemini! this fine gentleman my husband?

Sir John. My dear, I am overjoyed to see my family thus transported with ecstasy which you occasion'd.

Nell. Sir, I shall always be proud to do every thing that may give you delight, or your family satisfaction.

Sir John. By heav'n I am charm'd!—Dear creature, if thou continuest thus, I had rather enjoy thee than the Indies. But can this be real?—May I believe my senses?

Nell. All that's good above can witness for me, I am in earnest. [*Kneels.*

Sir John. Rise, my dearest. Now am I happy indeed.—Where are my friends, my servants? Call 'em all, and let them be witnesses of my happiness. [*Exit.*

Nell. O rare sweet man! He smells all over like a nosegay.—Heav'n preserve my wits.

AIR XIV. *'Twas within a Furlong, &c.*

O charming cunning man! thou hast been wond'rous kind;
And all thy golden words do now prove true, I find,
Ten thousand transports wait
To crown my happy state;
Thus kiss'd and press'd,
And doubly bless'd
In all this pomp and state:
New scenes of joy arise
Which fill me with surprise;
My rock, and reel,
And spinning-wheel,
And husband, I despise.
Then, Jobson, now adieu,
Thy cobling still pursue;
For hence I will not, cannot, no, nor must not brook to. [*Exit*

SCENE VII. Jobson's *House.*

Enter LADY.

Lady. Was ever lady yet so miserable! I can't make one soul in the village acknowledge me. They sure are all of the conspiracy. This wicked husband of mine has laid a devilish plot against me: I must at present submit, that I may hereafter have an opportunity of executing my design. Here comes the rogue; I'll have him strangled: but now I must yield.

Enter JOBSON.,

Job. Come on, Nell; art thou come to thyself yet?

Lady. Yes, I thank you; I wonder what I ail'd: this cunning man has put powder in my drink, most certainly.

Job. Powder! the brewer put good store of powder of malt in it, that's all. Powder, quoth she! ha, ha, ha!

Lady. I never was so ill in all the days of my life.

Job. Was so ill! No, nor I hope ne'er will be so again, to put me to the trouble of strapping you so devilishly.

Lady. I'll have that right hand cut off for that, rogue. [*Aside.*]—You was unmerciful to bruise me so.

Job. Well, I'm going to Sir John Loverule's; all his tenants are invited. There's to be rare feasting and revelling, and open house kept for three months.

Lady. Husband, shan't I go with you?

Job. What the devil ails thee now!—Did I not tell thee but yesterday, I would strap thee for desiring to go; and art thou at it again, with a pox?

Lady. What does the villain mean by strapping, and yesterday? [*Aside.*

Job. Why, I have been married but six weeks, and you long to make me a cuckold already. Stay at home, and be hang'd: there's good cold pie in

the cuphoard; but I'll trust thee no more with strong-beer, hufsey. [*Exit.*

Lady. Well, I'll not be long after you. Sure I shall get some of my own family to know me; they can't be all in this wicked plot. [*Exit.*

SCENE VIII. Sir John's.

Sir JOHN *and Company enter.*

AIR. *Duetto.*

Sir John. Was ever man poſsest of
So sweet, so kind a wife!
Nell. Dear sir, you make me proud.
Be you but kind,
And you shall find
All the good I can boast of
Shall end but with my life.
Sir John. Give me thy lips:
Nell. First let me, dear sir, wipe 'em.
Sir John. Was ever so sweet a wife!
[*Kissing her.*
Nell. Thank you, dear sir!
I vow and protest
I ne'er was so kist:
Again, sir!
Sir John. Again, and again, my dearest;
O may it last for life!
What joy thus to enfold thee!
Nell. What pleasure to behold thee!
Inclin'd again to kiſs?
Sir John. How ravishing the bliſs!
Nell. I little thought this morning
'Twould ever come to this. [*Da capo.*

Enter LADY.

Lady. Here's a fine rout and rioting! You, sirrah, Butler! you rogue!

But. Why, how now! who are you?

Lady. Impudent varlet! Don't you know your lady?

But. Lady! Here, turn this mad woman out of doors.

" *Lady.* You rascal—take that, sirrah.

" [*Flings a Glass at him.*

" *But.* Have a care, hussey, there's a good pump " without; we shall cool your courage for you."

Lady. You, Lucy! have you forgot me too, you minx?

Lucy. Forgot you, woman! Why, I never remember'd you, I never saw you before in my life.

Lady. Oh, the wicked slut! I'll give you cause to remember me, I will, hussey.

[*Pulls her Head-clothes off.*

Lucy. Murder, murder! Help!

Sir John. How now! What uproar's this!

Lady. You, Lettice, you slut! won't you know me neither? [*Strikes her.*

Let. Help, help!

Sir John. What's to do there?

But. Why, sir, here's a madwoman calls herself my lady, and is beating and cuffing us all round.

Sir John. [*To Lady.*] Thou my wife! poor creature, I pity thee——I never saw thee before.

Lady. Then it is in vain to expect redress from thee, thou wicked contriver of all my misery.

Nell. How I am amaz'd! Can that be I there in my clothes, that have made all this disturbance? And yet I am here, to my thinking, in these fine clothes. How can this be? I am so confounded and affrighted, that I begin to wish I was with Zekel Jobson again.

Lady. To whom shall I apply myself, or whither can I fly? Heav'n, what do I see!——Is not that I yonder in my gown and petticoat I wore yesterday? How can it be? I cannot be in two places at once?

Sir John. Poor wretch, she's stark mad.

Lady. What, in the devil's name, was I here before I came? Let me look in the glass——Oh, Heav'ns! I am astonish'd, I don't know myself!—If this be I that the glass shews, I never saw myself before.

Sir John. What incoherent madness is this!

Enter JOBSON.

Lady. There; that's the devil in my likeness.

who has robb'd me of my countenance. Is he here too?

Job. Ay, hufsey; and here's my strap you quean.

Nell. O dear, I'm afraid my husband will beat me, that am on t'other side of the room there.

Job. I hope your honours will pardon her; she was drinking with a conjuror last night, and has been mad ever since, and calls herself my Lady Loverule.

Sir John. Poor woman! take care of her; do not hurt her, she may be cured of this.

Job. Yes, an't please your worship, you shall see me cure her presently. Hufsey, do you see this?

Nell. O, pray, Zekel, don't beat me.

Sir John. What says my love? Does she infect thee with madneſs too?

Nell. I am not well—pray, lead me in.

[*Exeunt Nell and Maids.*

Job. I beseech your worship don't take it ill of me, she shall never trouble you more.

Sir John. Take her home, and use her kindly.

Lady. What will become of me?

[*Exeunt Jobson and Lady.*

Enter FOOTMAN.

Foot. Sir, the Doctor who called here last night desires you will give him leave to speak a word or two with you upon very earnest buſineſs.

Sir John. What can this mean? Bring him in.

Enter DOCTOR.

Doct. Lo! on my knees, sir, I beg forgiveneſs for what I have done, and put my life into your hands.

Sir John. What mean you?

Doct. I have exercis'd my magic art upon your Lady: I know you have too much honour to take away my life, since I might have still conceal'd it, had I pleas'd.

Sir John. You have now brought me to a glimpse of misery too great to bear. Is all my happin- then turn'd into vision only?

Doct. Sir, I beg you, fear not; if any harm c- on it, I freely give you leave to hang me.

Sir John. Inform me what you have done.

Doct. I have transform'd your lady's face so, that she seems the cobler's wife, and have charm'd her face into the likeneſs of my lady's; and last night, when the storm arose, my spirits convey'd them to each other's bed.

Sir John. Oh, wretch, thou hast undone me; I am fallen from the height of all my hopes, and must still be curst with a tempestuous wife, a fury whom I never knew quiet since I had her.

Doct. If that be all, I can continue the charm for both their lives.

Sir John. Let the event be what it will, I'll hang you if you do not end the charm this instant.

Doct. I will this minute, sir; and perhaps you'll find it the luckiest of your life: I can aſsure you your Lady will prove the better for it.

Sir John. Hold; there's one material circumstance I'd know.

Doct. Your pleasure, sir?

Sir John. Perhaps the cobler has——You understand me.

Doct. I do aſsure you no; for e'er she was conveyed to his bed, the cobler was got up to work, and he has done nought but beat her ever since; and you are like to reap the fruits of his labour. He'll be with you in a minute—Here he comes.

Enter JOBSON.

Sir John. So, Jobson, where's your wife?

Job. An't please your worship, she's here at the door; but indeed I thought I had lost her just now; for as she came into the hall, she fell into such a swoon, that I thought she would never come out on't again; but a tweak or two by the nose, and half a dozen straps, did the buſineſs at last. Here, where are you, housewife?

Enter LADY.

"*But.* O heaven, and earth! is this my lady?

"*Job.* What does he say? My wife chang'd to my "lady.

"*Cook.* Ay, I thought the other was too good for "our lady."

Lady. [*To Sir John.*] Sir, you are the person I have most offended; and here confeſs I have been the worst of wives in every thing, but that I always kept myself chaste. If you can vouchsafe once more to take me to your bosom, the remainder of my days shall joyfully be spent in duty and observance of your will.

Sir John. Rise, madam, I do forgive you; and if you are sincere in what you say, you'll make me happier than all the enjoyments in the world, without you, could do.

Job. What a pox! am I to lose my wife thus?

Enter LUCY *and* LETTICE.

Lucy. Oh, sir, the strangest accident has happened—it has amazed us!—My lady was in so great a swoon, we thought she had been dead.

Let. And, when she came to herself, she proved another woman.

Job. Ha! ha! ha! a bull, a bull.

Lucy. She is so chang'd, I knew her not; I never saw her face before. O lud, is this my lady?

Let. We shall be maul'd again.

Lucy. I thought our happineſs was too great to last.

Lady. Fear not, my servants; it shall hereafter be my endeavour to make you happy.

Sir John. Persevere in this resolution, and we shall be bleat indeed for life.

Enter NELL.

Nell. My head turns round, I must go home. O, Zekel! are you there?

Job. O lud! is that fine lady my wife? I'gad, I'm afraid to come near her. What can be the meaning of this?

Sir John. This is a happy change; and I'll have it celebrated with all the joy I proclaimed for my late short-liv'd vision.

Lady. To me it is the happiest day I ever knew.

" *Sir John.* Here, Jobson, take thy fine wife."

Job. But one word, sir.——Did not your worship make a buck of me, under the rose?

Sir John. No, upon my honour, nor ever kist

lips till I came from hunting; but since she has been a means of bringing about this happy change, I'll give thee five hundred pounds home with her; go buy a stock of leather.

Job. Bravo boys! I'm a prince—the prince of coblers! Come hither and kiss me, Nell; I'll never strap thee more.

Nell. Indeed, Zekel, I have been in such a dream, that I'm quite weary of it. [*To Jobson.*]—Forsooth, madam, will you please to take your clothes, and let me have mine again. [*To Lady Loverule.*

Job. Hold your tongue, you fool, they'll serve you to go to church. [*Aside.*

Lady. No; thou shalt keep them, and I'll preserve thine as relics.

Job. And can your ladyship forgive my strapping your honour so very much.

Lady. Most freely. The joy of this blessed change sets all things right again.

Sir John. Let us forget every thing that is past, and think of nothing but joy and pleasure.

AIR XVI. *Hey, boys, up go we.*

Lady. Let ev'ry face with smiles appear,
Be joy in ev'ry breast;
Since from a life of pain and care,
We now are truly blest.

Sir John. May no remembrance of past time
Our present pleasures soil;
Be nought but mirth and joy a crime,
And sporting all our toil.

Job. I hope you'll give me leave to speak
If I may be so bold;
There's nought but the devil and this good strap,
Could ever tame a scold.

END OF VOL. XIV.

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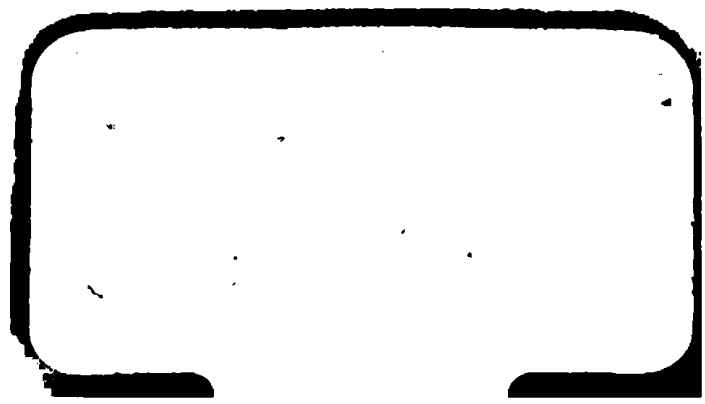
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